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ABSTRACT

A state survey examined the opinions of West Virginia educators about the educational system and needs for educational reform. Surveys were sent to 182 recognized educators (those receiving awards in the past 10 years), all 55 superintendents, and a random sample of 1,000 teachers and 41 principals. A total of 384 surveys were returned. Followup interviews were conducted with 60 subjects on the most salient issues emerging from survey results: funding, personnel evaluation, and personnel selection. The survey covered 12 educational areas: staff development, curriculum and graduation requirements, financial management, governance, school consolidation, computers, inclusion, teacher incentives, personnel evaluation, personnel assignments and mentoring, funding, and student transportation. For each area, cumulative responses for superintendents, principals, and teachers are presented, as well as top recommendations for change and representative comments. Areas receiving the most favorable responses were staff development, curriculum and graduation requirements, and financial management. The least favorable responses were found for evaluation, personnel assignment, and funding. In some areas, teacher and administrator attitudes differed. Overall, the top priorities for educational reform were in the areas of teacher quality, as it is influenced by hiring, placement, evaluation, and dismissal procedures, and funding, particularly with regard to the teacher-pupil ratio. A glossary and data tables are included. Appendices include the survey questionnaire, interview protocol, and tables of response frequencies and percentages. (SV)

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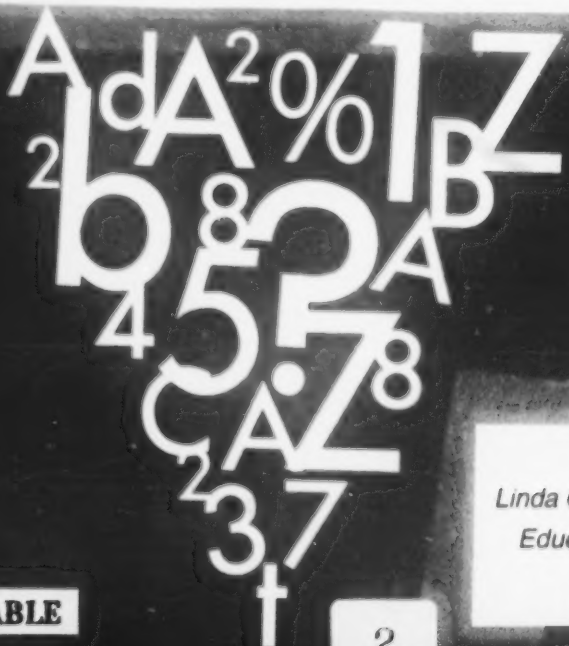
VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

EDUCATORS SPEAK OUT FOR CHANGE



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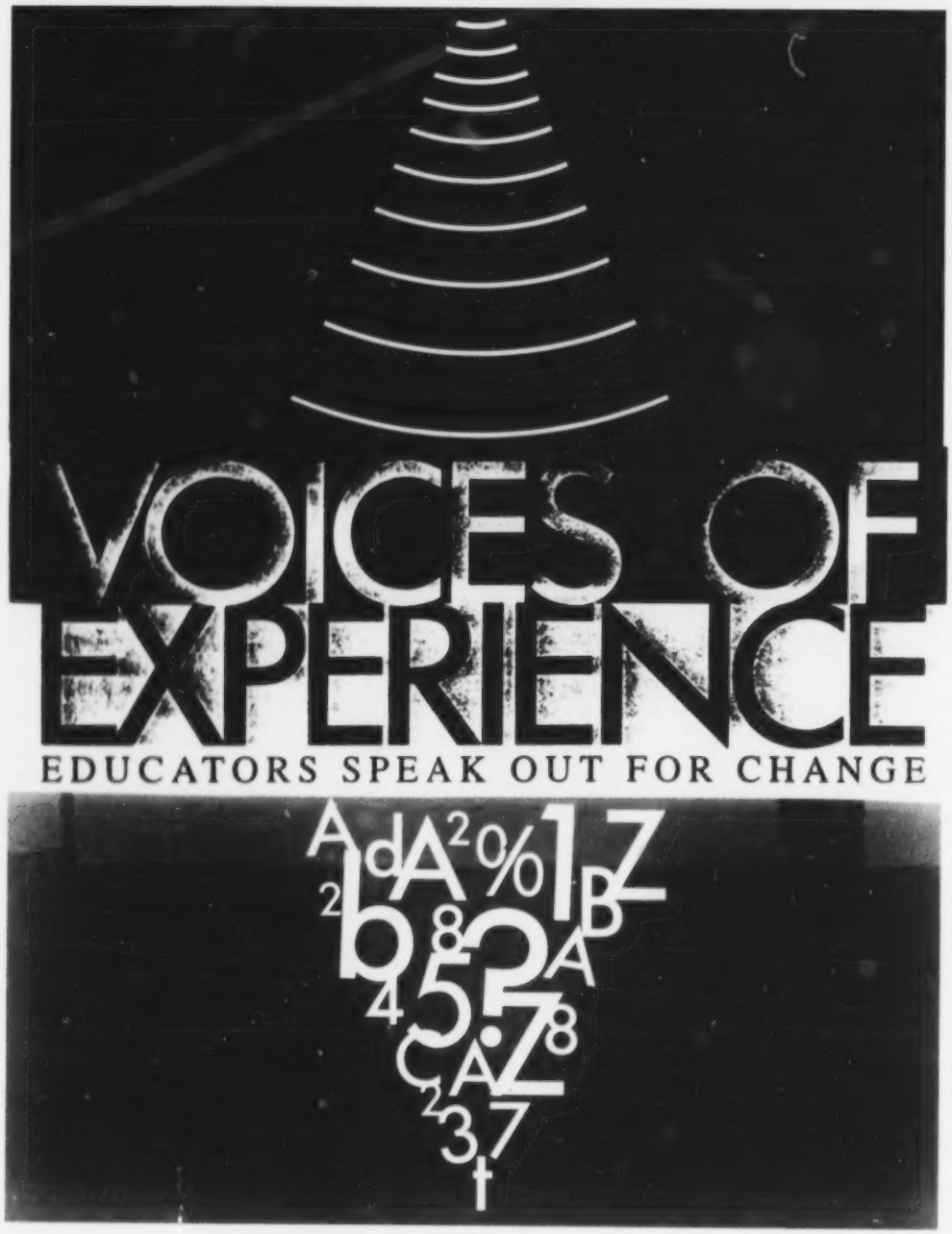

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We trust and hope this study will be of some guidance to our State's policymakers, as they consider the future course and direction of public education.

Linda Crone-Koshel
Arnie Margolin

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to obtain the opinions of West Virginia professional educators concerning the current educational system, and to provide a synopsis of these educators' recommendations for educational reform. In order to accomplish this goal, surveys were sent to 182 recognized educators (those who had received teacher, principal, or superintendent awards in the past ten years), and a random sample of 1,000 teachers, and 41 principals. All 55 superintendents were included in the survey because of their small number. Surveys included both closed (quantitative) and open-ended (qualitative) questions which covered 12 educational areas: staff development, computers, evaluation, teacher incentives, personnel assignment, curriculum and graduation requirements, governance, inclusion, funding, financial management, consolidation, and transportation. Respondents were also asked to list their top three priorities for educational reform.

To provide in-depth information, follow-up interviews were conducted with a random sample of 60 subjects. Interview subjects included five superintendents, five recognized superintendents, five principals, five recognized principals, twenty teachers, and twenty recognized teachers. Interview questions focused on the most salient issues that emerged from the survey results: funding, personnel evaluation, and personnel assignment. Interview subjects were also asked to cite their top three priorities for educational reform, and to provide detail regarding recommended changes.

Results summarized in this report are from four different sources:

- **Quantitative results**, indicating the percentage of favorable and unfavorable responses to the combined statements in each of the 12 educational areas;
- **Qualitative comments** from the survey, suggesting possible changes in each of the 12 areas;
- **Reform priorities**: categories which emerged when survey respondents were asked their three top priorities for educational reform; and
- **Results of interviews** in the areas of funding, personnel evaluation, personnel assignment, and reform priorities.

All four sources of information provided consistent results and confirmed the conclusions that have been drawn. Likewise, results reflect the opinions of all groups of educators, although recognized educators provided slightly more favorable responses than educators, and in some areas differences were observed between administrators and teachers.

Summary of Quantitative Results

Collectively, there were slightly more unfavorable responses than there were favorable responses. Those educational areas with the highest percentage of favorable responses were **Staff Development** (56% favorable), **Curriculum and Graduation Requirements** (50%), and **Financial Management** (49%). Conversely, **Evaluation** (32% favorable), **Personnel Assignment** (28%), and **Funding** (27%) were areas which received the lowest percentage of favorable responses.

Transportation received an even lower percentage of favorable responses (16%), but also received many responses of no opinion and a low percentage of qualitative comments (see Appendix D); consequently, results on transportation should be viewed with caution.

The findings of qualitative comments listed on the following page are listed in rank order according to the percentage of favorable responses to the quantitative questions.

Executive Summary

Summary of Qualitative Comments

The following is a summary of the most representative recommendations made by the 384 professional educators who participated in this study:

Staff Development: Staff development would be strengthened if it were tailored to the needs of the individual schools, teachers, and students.

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements: Curricular guidelines need to afford teachers more flexibility, but be more stringent in their requirements of the students.

Financial Management: Better planning and fiscal oversight were recommended.

Governance: Governance may be improved by regionalization of administration, coupled with greater autonomy at the school level.

Consolidation: Each school and district needs individual consideration when planning for consolidation, with elementary schools kept small and in the community.

Computers: More computer access is recommended for both teachers and students. Teachers need more quality training.

Inclusion: Inclusion has become too much of a blanket policy, to the point of being detrimental to the regular education students. Each case should be considered individually, and more preparation and support provided for the teachers.

Teacher Incentives: Suggested incentives provided to teachers include monetary supplements, recognition, and pay for performance.

Evaluation: The evaluation system is not working efficiently and would be improved if it were more stringent, with the possibility of other evaluators (peers or outside evaluators).

Personnel Assignment/ Mentoring: Personnel assignment should be based more on the performance of the individual, with less priority on seniority.

Funding: Inadequacies in the current funding formula require revision, with an emphasis on changing the allowances for personnel, and consideration for the individual needs of each county.

Transportation: The current bus driver work schedule needs revision. Transportation may be better handled at a regional level or if contracted out.

Executive Summary

Summary of Reform Priorities

In the final question of the survey, respondents were asked for the three most important changes they would make to the present system to improve the quality of education provided to West Virginia's public schools. Each response was analyzed, labeled, and grouped according to the most appropriate topic. Categories were then ranked according to the number and value (first, second, or third) of each comment. The top five categories for educational reform shown below confirm the previous findings:

Educators	Recognized Educators
1. Funding	1. Teacher Quality
2. Teacher Quality	2. Funding
3. Special Needs	3. Teacher Training
4. Governance	4. Calendar Changes
5. Smaller Classes/More Personnel	5. Governance

Comments found in these reform priority categories are summarized below:

- ***Teacher Quality:*** Respondents emphasized better hiring, evaluation, and dismissal procedures as means to improve teacher quality.
- ***Funding:*** Comments stressed that funding needs to be adequate and equitable, providing funds for mandates and additional personnel.
- ***Special Needs:*** Inclusion, as it is currently being implemented, is unsatisfactory; each case should be considered individually. More alternative schools and counselors are needed for behavioral problems.
- ***Teacher Training:*** Better trained teachers were called for, through more rigorous preservice training and staff development.
- ***Governance:*** Regional strategies, with more flexibility and control at the school level, were recommended.
- ***Calendar Changes:*** A restructuring of the school day or year was suggested.
- ***Smaller Classes/More Personnel:*** The present teacher/pupil ratio does not allow the teachers the opportunity to meet the needs of the students.

Summary of Interview Results

Interview results also confirmed the previous findings, with subjects expressing the belief that:

- Top priorities for reform are teacher quality and funding;
- Personnel assignment should be based on the performance of the individual;
- Funding is not adequate to meet the needs of the students; and
- The evaluation system is not working properly.

Conclusion

The voices of experience have spoken. Those professionals who directly work for, and are the most knowledgeable of, West Virginia's educational system have shared their collective wisdom in this research study. The message suggests that, while significant reforms have been implemented which demonstrate the state's commitment to providing a high quality education for every student, there remain myriad substantive areas where improvements are appropriate.

Introduction

West Virginia has recently received national recognition for its educational system's positive impact on the quality of education (Quality Counts: The State of the States, 1997; NAEP: The Nation's Report Card, 1996). Statewide reforms, begun in 1989, have been in the areas of technology, school-to-work, new school construction which has resulted in consolidation, empowerment of local schools, and comprehensive statewide testing. Increases in statewide test scores and high marks on standards and assessment provide evidence of the success of these reforms, yet inequities and dissatisfaction still exist in many West Virginia schools. In order to better determine the areas that are working and those that are in need of further reform, educators throughout the state were asked to assess the current educational system.

This study was designed to elicit, through both surveys and personal interviews, the opinions of teachers, assistant principals, principals, and superintendents of West Virginia Public Schools concerning their degree of satisfaction with the current West Virginia educational system, and their recommendations for potential changes to the current system. The survey covered the following 12 educational areas: staff development, computers, evaluation, teacher incentives, personnel assignment, curriculum and graduation requirements, governance, inclusion, funding, financial management, consolidation, and transportation. It also solicited educators' general recommendations for reform. In-depth interviews were conducted to follow up on responses of the survey.

Subjects

Sample: Phase I

This study initially was designed to survey *recognized* educators. Subjects included all teachers, assistant principals, principals, and superintendents who received statewide recognition (including Teacher of the Year, Assistant Principal of the Year, Principal of the Year, Superintendent of the Year, Presidential Awards for Excellence in science and math, Milken Educator Awards, and Ashland Inc. Individual Teacher Achievement Awards) in the past ten years. All subjects (N=182) received the initial survey; 30 were then selected for interviews. A predetermined number of subjects was randomly selected from each of the categories, including five superintendents, five assistant principals/principals, and twenty teachers (four from each teacher award category). For purposes of this study, assistant principals and principals were grouped together and considered as a single category, which will be referred to as *principals*. These "Phase I" subjects will be referred to collectively as *recognized educators*, or as teachers, principals, and superintendents also preceded by the term *recognized*. Occasionally, Phase I superintendents and principals will be referred to jointly as *recognized administrators*.

Sample: Phase II

In order to make the study more representative of the entire population of educators, a second phase added a five percent random sample of all classroom teachers and other instructional staff (n=1,000) and principals (n=41) in the West Virginia public school system. Subjects included in Phase I were excluded from Phase II. All superintendents not included in Phase I (45) were surveyed, due to the small number in this group. Thirty of these "Phase II" subjects were randomly selected for interviews, including five superintendents, five principals, and twenty teachers. For purposes of this study, all Phase II subjects will be referred to collectively as *educators*. Phase II principals and superintendents will be referred to jointly as *administrators*. When speaking of both Phase I and Phase II subjects, the term *respondents* will be used.

Procedures

A written questionnaire designed for the study was mailed to all Phase I subjects; approximately one month later, Phase II surveys were mailed. In addition to demographic information, the questionnaires included statements for which the respondents were asked to circle their degree of agreement/ disagreement (e.g., Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement) and open-ended questions on each topic asking for recommendations for change (e.g., How would you change the way computers are used in the schools?). Additionally, they were asked to list and discuss, in order of priority, the three most important changes they would like to see made to the present West Virginia educational system. (See Appendix A for the complete survey.)

The interview process, which was completed within six months of the survey distribution, was standardized, with the same instructions and questions provided for each interview. The questions for the interviews concentrated on areas in which professional educators expressed the greatest concerns in their survey responses: funding, evaluation, and personnel assignment. Subjects were also asked to identify their top three priorities for educational change, and go into detail concerning those changes. At the end of the interview they were given the opportunity to provide additional comments on the educational system. Interviews of approximately 30 minutes each were personally conducted and taped by the two researchers. (See Appendix B for Interview Protocol.)

Analyses

Results from the analysis of quantitative data (where subjects were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with the statements provided on the survey) will be reported by the number and percentage of responses to each statement. In addition to overall responses, data were examined and compared by groups (e.g., teachers/principals/superintendents; recognized educators/educators). Recognized educator and educator results were kept separate because the recognized educator survey was disseminated prior to the decision to add the representative sample of all educators.

Qualitative (open-ended) responses from all questionnaires were sorted into categories and analyzed. Results include the number and percentage of responses which fit into each category and representative selections of responses from these categories. Because of the similarity of responses, qualitative comments were not separated by position (teacher, principal, superintendent). Any outstanding differences in comments of teachers, principals, and superintendents are noted in the text. Numbers and percents from the categories will not add up to the total number of responses, or 100%, due to the fact that categories with 'ess than five percent were not included. Also, each subject area included a miscellaneous category for comments that were unrelated. In some instances, the total percentage of responses within a given subject area may total more than 100%, as some comments were considered appropriate to be included in more than one category.

Most quotations from interviews will be found in the sections dealing with evaluation, personnel assignment, funding, and top priorities for change. The final interview question asked for any additional comments; these are included in other sections, where appropriate.

Results

The survey response rate was approximately 44% for recognized educators (Phase I) and 30% for educators (Phase II), with a total of 384 surveys returned. Returned surveys from recognized educators (n=80) included eight of the ten superintendents in the sample, 15 of the 27 principals/assistant principals, and 55 of the 145 teachers. Two surveys were not identified by position. Returned surveys from educators (n=304) included 27 of the 45 superintendents in the sample, 25 of the 41 principals, and 242 of the 1,000 teachers. Ten educator surveys were not identified by position. Of the selected interview sample, 95% agreed to be interviewed. Alternates were used to replace those who declined.

Results are reported in rank order, with the educational areas receiving the highest percentage of favorable responses presented first. Favorable responses to all statements pertaining to individual educational areas were combined to determine the order of most favorable to least favorable. The final section of the survey, entitled *Miscellaneous*, contained issues that, while not currently practiced statewide (e.g., school calendar, team teaching), are of interest to the researchers and educators. This section will be presented last.

To avoid any potential bias, survey statements concerning different aspects of the current educational system were worded both positively and negatively. Results in the following tables will be presented by the percentage of subjects who responded with either strongly agree or agree to positive statements, and the percentage of subjects who responded with either strongly disagree or disagree to negative statements. These responses (agreeing with positive or disagreeing with negative) are interpreted as responding favorably toward the current educational system.

Staff Development

Staff development is the area which received the highest percentage of favorable responses from all groups, with a combined favorable response rate of 56%. Table 1 shows the percentage of respondents in each category who circled that they either strongly agreed or agreed with the positive statements concerning staff development, and either strongly disagreed or disagreed with negative statements. In all areas, respondents also had the choice of "No Opinion."

Statements relating to sufficient training and follow-up were not scored as favorably as those regarding relevance and subject area knowledge. As illustrated in Table 1, superintendents and principals were more positive than teachers regarding relevance and value of staff development. (Appendix C provides a table of all responses in all educational areas.)

Table 1. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on staff development.

Positive Statements Regarding Staff Development	**Strongly Agree + Agree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge.	85%	88%	58%	88%	73%	67%
Staff Development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom.	67%	63%	46%	50%	60%	60%
Negative Statements Regarding Staff Development	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers.	92%	88%	64%	100%	93%	80%
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received.	52%	44%	42%	43%	60%	39%

In response to the question *"What would you do (within current budget constraints) to change the staff development provided in your school?"* the most prevalent categories that emerged were quite similar for both educators and recognized educators. Table 2 presents both groups' top recommendations for change in staff development.

Table 2. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for staff development.

Categories of Recommended Change: Staff Development	
Educators (n=205*)	**Recognized Educators (n=67*)**
1. Needs Based (43 comments: 21%)	1. Needs Based (18 comments: 27%)
2. Content Specific (37 comments: 18%)	2. More Time (13 comments: 19%)
3. Site-based (22 comments: 11%)	3. Content Specific (11 comments: 16%)
4. More Time (21 comments: 10%)	4. More Follow-up (10 comments: 15%)
5. More Follow-up (17 comments: 8%)	5. Regional/State Level (7 comments: 10%)
6. No Change (16 comments: 8%)	6. Site-based (5 comments: 7%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Staff Development

The majority of superintendent and principal comments were in the categories of *Needs Based*, *More Time*, and *More Follow-up*. In expressing the need for more time, teachers especially communicated their frustration at not having time to collaborate with colleagues to implement change. Examples of comments regarding staff development are provided below, identified by position. The icon to the left of the question identifies the comments as those from the written survey.

Survey Question: **What would you do (within current budget constraints) to change the staff development provided in your school?**

Staff development seems to have taken a "smorgasbord" approach to training teachers and administrators. A sampling of many ideas does not motivate change, if that is what is desired. Instead, I feel a theme or focus should be adopted county-wide. The training provided should be ongoing and pervasive with a commitment from the county level to ensure depth of training over the long term. (Recognized teacher)

More needs assessment related; related to student needs in academic areas; need follow-up by school principals to align staff development and student achievement. (Superintendent)

Make it more need specific with follow-up to ensure usefulness of information as well as use by staff. (Principal)

As much as possible, allow the staff at each school to choose the staff development topics so that they are relevant to the needs of the school, not the county as a whole. (Teacher)

Teachers and school administrators should be involved continuously in the planning and evaluation of all staff development programs. RESAs could be given more responsibility for providing quality staff development programs in county school districts. (Recognized superintendent)

What I need is time to work with my colleagues to develop plans for implementing new ideas. This time to collaborate is the key piece. Without it, one just accumulates files and piles of new ideas, new knowledge, old ideas, old knowledge that aren't even available when you need them. (Teacher)

Our school is very unique. We do our own staff development and follow-up. it would be beneficial for others to have this opportunity. (Teacher)

Curriculum and Graduation Requirements

Overall, responses for curriculum and graduation requirements were 50% favorable. As illustrated in Table 3, the majority of respondents agreed that a statewide curriculum is necessary. A higher percentage of administrators responded favorably to the *New Instructional Goals and Objectives* than did teachers. It appears that most respondents would like to see more stringent graduation requirements.

Table 3. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on curriculum and graduation requirements.

Positive Statements Regarding Curriculum and Graduation Requirements	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	78%	68%	80%	100%	67%	80%
New Instructional Goals and Objectives, published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provide standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	93%	52%	48%	75%	93%	69%
Negative Statements Regarding Curriculum and Graduation Requirements	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.	30%	25%	23%	25%	7%	13%
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.	41%	46%	42%	63%	64%	42%

When respondents were asked what kind of curriculum guidelines they would provide to teachers, they suggested that curriculum be used as just a guideline, with teachers allowed more flexibility. Other recommendations called for more stringent standards and graduation requirements, and adherence to the new ***Instructional Goals and Objectives***. In this area, many comments from educators fell into the miscellaneous category; hence, only 66% of the comments are accounted for in the categories listed in Table 4. Comments concerning *Instructional Goals* expressed optimism toward the new ***Instructional Goals and Objectives***.

Table 4. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for curriculum and graduation requirements.

Categories of Curriculum Recommendations	
Educators (n=143*)	**Recognized Educators (n=53*)**
1. More Stringent (30 comments: 21%)	1. More Flexibility (12 comments: 23%)
2. Guidelines (19 comments: 13%)	2. Guidelines (10 comments: 19%)
3. Instructional Goals (16 comments: 11%)	3. Instructional Goals (9 comments: 17%)
4. More Flexibility (11 comments: 8%)	4. Train Teachers (8 comments: 15%)
5. More Basics (10 comments: 7%)	4. More Stringent (8 comments: 15%)
6. More Realistic (9 comments: 6%)	5. Monitor Curriculum Use (5 comments: 9%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question

Curriculum and Graduation Requirements

Survey Question: **What kind of curricular guidelines would you provide to teachers?**

One with higher standards, more flexibility and a broader scope. (Teacher)

Broad, concise guidelines without an abundance of educational jargon! Be specific enough that a new teacher can grow, but let the experienced teacher be able to use his knowledge. Guidelines should be helpers — basic, easily understood and read. (Recognized teacher)

The use of *Instructional Goals and Objectives* is the right first step. The follow-up is also very important. We must not let this be one of those "this also shall pass" things. (Superintendent)

Provide minimum curriculum standards, but provide professional development (training) in assessment and meeting individual needs of students.... (Recognized superintendent)

Develop a good monitoring system. (Recognized principal)

The elementary schools need to focus on the basic skills needed to make a student an independent learner. Reading skills need to be stressed; without reading skills all other subjects become irrelevant in the success or failure of the child's curriculum. (Principal)

The curriculum has twice as much to teach as we can fit in during the school year. Subjects must be breezed over in order to get it all in, which does it no justice. The pace is faster than children can truly learn it in. (Teacher)

Financial Management

Superintendents provided the highest percentage of favorable responses to statements in the area of financial management (Table 5). Teachers, however, were less positive than other respondents, resulting in 49% favorable comments.

Table 5. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on financial management.

Positive Statements Regarding Financial Management	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.	70%	72%	39%	57%	64%	51%
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	85%	64%	36%	88%	50%	52%
Negative Statements Regarding Financial Management	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.	70%	48%	50%	88%	50%	63%

Respondents were asked for the most important budgeting strategies the counties should employ to ensure their continued fiscal integrity and financial soundness. As can be seen in Table 6, many respondents did not provide comments on financial management, with some simply stating that they had no knowledge in this area. Comments concerning different priorities were made mostly by teachers.

Table 6. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for financial management.

Categories of Recommendations for Financial Management	
Educators (n=100*).	**Recognized Educators (n=34*)**
1. Better Planning/Oversight (32 comments: 32%)	1. Better Planning/Oversight (12 comments: 35%)
2. Different Priorities (26 comments: 26%)	2. Site-based Management (8 comments: 24%)
3. Stay Within Formula (16 comments: 16%)	3. Funding Formula Revision (5 comments: 15%)
4. No Knowledge (10 comments: 10%)	3. Stay Within the Formula (5 comments: 15%)
5. Site-based Management (9 comments: 9%)	4. Different Priorities (3 comments: 9%)
6. Funding Formula Revision (7 comments: 7%)	

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Financial Management

Survey Question: **What are the most important budgeting strategies the counties should employ to ensure their continued fiscal integrity and financial soundness?**

Reduce waste and use money more wisely. Reduce the workforce if you have too many, reduce utility expenses by conserving, combine schools if you don't have enough students enrolled, eliminate kindergarten aides...do preventive maintenance...eliminate all of the workshops and sessions with teachers, and don't replace math, reading and English textbooks as often. (Teacher)

A strategic plan must be facilitated by budgeting to meet the plan. Many of these decisions are best made at the school level. (Recognized superintendent)

The [county] Board of Education has to be prepared to reexamine all aspects of its budget and be prepared to cut administration, service personnel, as well as teachers and programs. Fiscally responsible Boards of Education will obey the state mandate of having a balanced budget and the state should enforce this. (Recognized teacher)

Staff beyond the formula must be laid off or a county will go into deficit. The formula is inadequate to meet student needs. Thus, systems must meet needs and go into deficit or lay off staff to meet budget and adversely affect education. Pick your poison. Either way the Board loses and students lose. (Superintendent)

The cost of two four-wheel drive vehicles for the Superintendent and Transportation Director could have funded an additional teacher for a year or provided extra-curricular pay for academic activities. (Teacher)

Governance

The area of governance received relatively favorable responses from all groups (46%), with superintendents generally providing the highest percentage of favorable responses. As shown in Table 7, teachers and principals in both groups were much less favorable than superintendents concerning the effectiveness of the present governance system.

Table 7. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on governance.

Positive Statements Regarding Governance	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	82%	58%	47%	75%	47%	54%
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	59%	44%	44%	63%	60%	56%
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.	74%	40%	59%	63%	86%	67%
Negative Statements Regarding Governance	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	56%	44%	27%	50%	33%	35%
The present system of governance is not working well.	56%	32%	29%	75%	40%	47%

As reported in Table 8, less than half (42%) of the educators and 63% of recognized educators provided suggestions for change in this area. For both groups, most comments fell into the category of providing some sort of regional governing units. Many comments also focused on providing more true *Site-Based Management*, and *Less State Control*. The *More Equity* category contained only teacher comments; otherwise, administrator and recognized administrator comments were found throughout all categories.

Table 8. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for governance.

Categories of Change in Governance	
Educators (n=127*)	**Recognized Educators (n=50*)**
1. Regional Strategy (30 comments: 24%)	1. Regional Strategy (15 comments: 30%)
2. Site-based (27 comments: 21%)	2. Site-based (13 comments: 26%)
3. Less State Control (21 comments: 17%)	3. Change Board (9 comments: 18%)
4. More Equity (18 comments: 14%)	4. Less State Control (7 comments: 14%)
5. Change Board (13 comments: 10%)	4. No Change (7 comments: 14%)
6. No Change (11 comments: 9%)	

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Governance

Survey Question: **How would you change the current system of governing the schools?**

Dump the 55 county systems and use RESA districts as governing districts. (Teacher)

In our county, the system works very well. Our school has exercised great autonomy and seized opportunities to create/develop programs that fit the needs of our students. Site-based management works! (Principal)

Too much local creativity by boards of education. Some see role as above law or policy. More training (required) for board members on how to improve schools from their level. (Recognized principal)

Too many mandates from state that don't make local sense; flip flop priorities — state should worry about curricular standards but not push methods (i.e., technology, school to work, school improvement councils, faculty senates, etc.). (Recognized teacher)

It would be nice if the current governance system provided equal education to all children — BUT IT DOES NOT! (Teacher)

Consolidation

Forty-three percent of the total responses were favorable concerning consolidation. Teachers in both groups were less positive about the efficiency of the School Building Authority than were administrators or recognized administrators. Responses to other statements (Table 9) showed that principals in the educator group were the least favorable toward the state's consolidation efforts; and in all cases, superintendents and recognized superintendents provided the highest percentage of positive responses regarding consolidation.

Table 9. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on consolidation.

Positive Statements Regarding Consolidation	**Strongly Agree + Agree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	70%	56%	38%	75%	53%	42%
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.	85%	33%	42%	75%	60%	54%
Negative Statements Regarding Consolidation	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.	74%	36%	39%	75%	73%	52%
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.	78%	24%	31%	75%	67%	38%

The response rate was relatively low for comments related to consolidation. The open-ended question was stated so that subjects were asked to provide recommendations only if they were opposed to the present system. The categories *Keep Small Schools*, *Not for All*, and *Use Technology* could be considered subcategories of *Against Consolidation*. Comments, though, were diverse and kept separate, with the category *Against Consolidation* only containing comments that did not fall in the other categories. Of those who responded, many professional educators shared the belief that small community schools were better, at least for elementary grades (Table 10). Three comments expressing concern over long bus rides for children were made by recognized teachers.

Table 10. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for consolidation.

Categories of Recommendations for Consolidation	
Educators (n=114*)	**Recognized Educators (n=28*)**
1. Keep Small Schools (42 comments: 37%)	1. Not for All (9 comments: 32%)
2. Better Management (23 comments: 20%)	2. Keep Small Schools (8 comments: 29%)
3. Not for All (18 comments: 16%)	3. Better Management (5 comments: 18%)
4. For Consolidation (17 comments: 15%)	4. Use Technology (4 comments: 14%)
5. Against Consolidation (11 comments: 10%)	5. Busing Problems (3 comments: 11%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Consolidation

Survey Question: **If you do not believe that the present consolidation plan is best for the students, what would you recommend as an alternative?**

Again it seems we are more concerned with money than well-being. Studies show that smaller schools perform better, and have less problems, and removing a school from the community helps in destroying that community, and travel time increases, which wastes another asset — time. (Teacher)

Consolidation at the high school level is acceptable. It assures that a wide range of electives may be offered to the students. At the primary level it's a different story. Primary schools should be small community schools with close ties to the community they serve. This allows for more parental involvement in and out of the classroom. Large primary schools become impersonal and overwhelming to both the students and parents. I'm sure with very little effort one could find research to support this position. (Recognized teacher)

Consolidation is needed for future development, but in our county it was not planned well. Thus, the two consolidated high schools are not comprehensive schools, and our Vo-Tech [Vocational Education] Center is wasted. There is no money left for a badly needed alternative school. (Teacher)

Consolidation is a must in some areas to ensure that students are offered a broader curriculum. (Teacher)

You knew before you started that consolidation was not working in other states (or you did not do your homework). Other states had already turned to academies, etc., as a means of making the school experience more meaningful to each student. (Teacher)

Bigger is not always better. Use technology and/or district learning centers to increase course offerings. (Recognized teacher)

The present system requires many students to spend too much time riding buses to and from school. I do not know the solution to the problem. (Recognized teacher)

Computers

Most respondents (especially superintendents and recognized superintendents), indicated that they believe computers enhance student learning. With the exception of principals, fewer educators than recognized educators expressed the opinion that teachers were properly prepared to teach and use computers (Table 11). When all responses were combined, computers had a 42% favorable response rate.

Table 11. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on computers.

Positive Statements Regarding Computers	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier.	22%	33%	40%	13%	47%	43%
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers.	48%	50%	38%	75%	47%	53%
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement.	89%	68%	55%	100%	50%	72%
Negative Statements Regarding Computers	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Supertndnts.	Principals	Teachers
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized.	30%	52%	28%	38%	21%	26%
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers.	29%	36%	38%	63%	33%	40%

Qualitative results indicated a need for more training and more access to computers. Table 12 shows the top categories that resulted from an analysis of total responses to the question *"How would you (within current budget constraints) change the way computers are used in the schools?"* Comments calling for more computer access included access for both students and teachers. All categories contained a mixture of comments from teachers, principals, and superintendents. Integration of computers into the subject areas in the classroom appeared to be a priority of administrators, as this category, *Integration with Content*, contained a higher proportion of administrators than were found in other categories.

Table 12. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for computers.

Categories of Recommended Change	
Educators (n=230*)	**Recognized Educators (n=69*)**
1. More Access (78 comments: 34%)	1. More Teacher Training (25 comments: 36%)
2. More Teacher Training (67 comments: 29%)	2. More Access (19 comments: 28%)
3. More Computers in Classrooms (44 comments: 19%)	3. More Internet Access (13 comments: 19%)
4. More Internet Access (24 comments: 10%)	4. More Software (10 comments: 14%)
5. Update Equipment (22 comments: 10%)	5. Integration with Content (9 comments: 13%)
6. Technical Support (18 comments: 8%)	6. More Time (7 comments: 10%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Computers

Survey Question: **How would you (within current budget constraints) change the way computers are used in the schools?**

We need continued training for teaching with technology — which should be happening in every classroom. Each school needs at least a part-time technology assistant to go into the classroom and help the teacher reap the benefits of what is available — show how to integrate the technology into their curriculum. Many teachers do not understand how valuable a resource they have access to.... (Recognized teacher)

Training for all teachers in using computers. Internet available to all schools. Computers in all classrooms. (Teacher)

I feel the teachers need more time to review the student's progress on the Josten's system. They don't have follow-up training and they need it. After they receive the initial training, they are overwhelmed and need follow-up training to ask questions and to learn more about the system. (Recognized principal)

Staff training at the school level to integrate computers into all subject areas. Staff training on uses of Internet. Additional computers necessary to replace old, antiquated computers. (Superintendent)

At the present time, all students have the opportunity to use some program on the computer; however, I would like to introduce software appropriate for my specialty for the students.... (Recognized teacher)

Each school needs a computer lab coordinator to maintain the computers and lab, and train teachers on the software. When teachers bring students to lab they must come to lab with students and learn to use, or be able to use, the software so they can teach or help their students. (Teacher)

Inclusion

Inclusion received mixed responses, as indicated in Table 13. Altogether, 37% of the responses to statements regarding inclusion were favorable. It appears that, while the majority of total respondents are in favor of the concept of inclusion, an overwhelming majority feel the classroom teachers are not well prepared to deal with it. Likewise, the majority felt disruptions caused by special education students were unfair to regular education students.

Table 13. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on inclusion.

Positive Statements Regarding Inclusion	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	67%	56%	47%	75%	80%	53%
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.	78%	63%	58%	75%	80%	63%
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.	11%	0%	7%	0%	13%	9%
Negative Statements Regarding Inclusion	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.	37%	32%	21%	88%	60%	26%
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	12%	16%	12%	13%	27%	9%
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.	89%	80%	53%	88%	87%	66%

Responses to the qualitative question further emphasized the complexity of trying to address the issue of designing inclusion programs that are equitable and satisfactory to all parties involved. There were very strong responses from both groups that inclusion is being used without considering each individual case, and that some students (especially those with behavior disorders) absolutely do not belong in the regular classroom. Teachers expressed the need for much more support, from both special education teachers and aides, in dealing with special education students. Table 14 shows the top categories which emerged from recommendations regarding inclusion.

Table 14. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for inclusion.

Categories for Inclusion Recommendations	
Educators (n=194*)	**Recognized Educators (n=57*)**
1. Not for All (82 comments: 42%)	1. Not for All (28 comments: 49%)
2. More Support (37 comments: 19%)	2. More Support (12 comments: 21%)
3. Keep Separate (34 comments: 18%)	3. More Training/Supplies (10 comments: 18%)
4. Unfair to Regular Students (25 comments: 13%)	3. Unfair to Regular Students (10 comments: 18%)
5. More Training/Supplies (21 comments: 11%)	4. My School OK (6 comments: 11%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Inclusion

Survey Question: **How would you realistically (within current budget constraints) provide for the needs of special education students?**

With complete honesty of all parties concerned, evaluate every special education client for proper care and services. For most, this will mean inclusion; for some, it will not. The client's needs should be paramount. (Superintendent)

Some special students are includable. Some are not. However, inclusion has become an across-the-board effort. Regular students should never be expected to compensate for the learning of a special student at the expense of the learning of the regular student. It happens all the time. (Recognized teacher)

Provide more undivided attention through aides, community and student volunteers, while providing more institutional attention to regular students by the creative use of educational technology and volunteers, aides cited above. The teacher's role would be leader/manager of their resources. (Recognized superintendent)

Provide regular education teachers with in-services and allow them to visit classrooms where inclusion has been successful. (Principal)

They (special education students) need more one-on-one; they get lost in regular classroom settings. (Teacher)

My school is fine; county and state need training and a dedicated administrator that does not allow disruption of classroom programming for any student. (Recognized principal)

An interview comment on inclusion provides a principal's insight on this sensitive subject:

"I personally have had many situations to work with students included in my classrooms, and I know that I have helped some children who have been included from special education programs. But I also know that there have been times, as a veteran teacher with a Masters plus 45, that I have lain awake at night and questioned, *Am I doing what is best? Am I really trained in this situation?* In dealing with parents of special needs children, educators — even with experience and even as a parent — really need training. We need help to use the time wisely with those children who are mainstreamed into our classroom. I think that those who are in charge and those who are behind desks really need to see hands-on what's going on with inclusion in the classroom and [need] to interview people, [including] teachers, [and ask] *How do you feel about this? How is it working?*...I really feel in my heart it is not the best thing for every child to be mainstreamed into the classroom....And the other children in the classroom are affected by inclusion. Perhaps it wouldn't be such a bad idea to talk with parents and other students to see how they are affected by some of the mainstreaming that takes place." (Principal)

Teacher Incentives

As illustrated in Table 15, the majority of respondents did not express a belief that the present system provides adequate incentives to teachers (34% favorable responses). Superintendents were more favorable toward the current system of salary increases than principals or teachers. Principals and teachers responded more favorably concerning the current permanent license process than did superintendents. Teachers appeared to be more favorable than recognized teachers toward the two licensure statements.

Table 15. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on teacher incentives.

Positive Statements Regarding Teacher Incentives	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best.	44%	12%	22%	25%	33%	35%
The current system of salary increases is equitable.	54%	28%	26%	63%	27%	31%
Negative Statements Regarding Teacher Incentives	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers.	23%	40%	33%	13%	33%	22%
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve.	15%	48%	57%	13%	47%	38%

The most frequently mentioned topics for personnel incentives were monetary awards (either directly to teachers or in the form of reimbursements for tuition and conferences), more recognition, and pay for exemplary performance or extra duties. Table 16 presents the most prevalent categories of recommendations for teacher incentives. Comments categorized as *Monetary Supplements* included references to higher salaries, bonuses, and reimbursement for conferences and tuition. The category of *Pay for Performance* included only those comments which specifically referred to correlation of pay with performance or objective evaluation. Although administrator and recognized administrator comments were dispersed throughout all categories, more were found in the categories of *Monetary Supplements* and *Pay for Performance*.

Table 16. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for teacher incentives.

Categories of Recommended Incentives	
Educators (n=192*)	**Recognized Educators (n=66*)**
1. Monetary Supplements (50 comments: 26%)	1. Recognition (16 comments: 24%)
2. Pay for Performance (39 comments: 20%)	2. Pay for Performance (15 comments: 23%)
3. Release Time (27 comments: 14%)	3. Monetary Supplements (14 comments: 21%)
4. Recognition (22 comments: 11%)	4. Release Time (10 comments: 15%)
4. Motivational Training (22 comments: 11%)	5. Additional Salary Steps (7 comments: 11%)
5. Additional Salary Steps (17 comments: 9%)	5. Motivational Training (7 comments: 11%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Teacher Incentives

Survey Question: **What kind of incentive system would you provide to personnel (within current budget constraints)?**

A teaching certificate or education degree does not a teacher make. The incentives in our state do not motivate the best students to pursue teaching degrees. Therefore, the system suffers. It's a Catch-22: the public doesn't want to pay for reasons of poor performance, and lack of incentives for teachers leads to poor performance. (Teacher)

More positive programs recognizing outstanding teachers might be a consideration. Quality professional development also helps. I think teachers have to realize that the more they put into the job the more they get out and I don't know how that message gets to the front lines. (Recognized teacher)

An incentive system — not merit pay per se — should be linked to the personnel evaluation system described above and related to the goals/objectives/strategic plans of the WV School Districts. (Recognized superintendent)

There are quality motivated teachers within the WV educational system — but the system does not ensure this. Some stop doing new things once they have reached a Masters + 45 salary classification. Others are more self-motivated and never stop seeking opportunities to grow and improve. Current budget constraints probably prevent a Masters + 60 classification — but it would help. (Recognized teacher)

Our salary increases are equitable but do nothing to encourage better performance. Knowledge in a person and the desire to present that knowledge in an interesting, informative manner to others are two entirely different things. I believe that encouraging teachers to attend conferences and workshops would help. Often, teachers must fight for a day off to attend a conference, pay from their own pocket, arrange and finance transportation. Take a lesson from the business community. (Teacher)

An interview subject spoke about the importance of teachers being recognized for their true accomplishments:

"I would have had trouble saying this 20 years ago — maybe even a couple of years ago — but I've seen enough and been around enough that I think it would help in the long run if we got rid of permanent certification and that teachers be recognized and rewarded for what they do and not for how long they've been in the system. I think it is a detriment to education. I think that I would be more challenged if I knew that my performance was going to be a criteria from which I was going to be rewarded." (Recognized Superintendent)

Evaluation

Respondents expressed little satisfaction with the current system of evaluation, with only 32% responding favorably to statements regarding evaluation. As indicated in Table 17, very few felt that the evaluation system helps weed out incompetent personnel. In both Phase I and Phase II groups, superintendents gave a higher percentage of positive responses than teachers. Among recognized educators, superintendents reacted more favorably toward present evaluation strategies than did principals or teachers.

Table 17. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on evaluation.

Positive Statements Regarding Evaluation	**Strongly Agree + Agree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals, and superintendents).	8%	4%	5%	25%	13%	9%
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills.	56%	28%	22%	63%	27%	33%
Negative Statements Regarding Evaluation	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers
Many personnel never really get any evaluation.	69%	72%	40%	75%	73%	43%
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing.	62%	72%	43%	88%	40%	46%

Answers to the question *"How would you change the current evaluation system?"* confirmed the results of the quantitative analysis, with the majority of the comments calling for more stringent evaluations or indicating that the present evaluation system is either not working or not properly implemented. Categories with the largest percentage of responses are shown in Table 18. Comments in the category termed *More Stringent* referred to the need for more stringent evaluations, more time spent on evaluations, and more follow-up. Suggestions for *Other Evaluators* ranged from peer evaluation to outside evaluators. In the educator group, most administrator comments were found in the first two categories, *More Stringent* and *Not Working*. Most of the recognized administrator comments dealt with the evaluation system not being implemented or not working. Two categories, *Other Evaluators* and *Evaluate Administrators*, contained comments only from teachers or recognized teachers. The suggestion that the evaluation system is as good as the principal conducting the evaluation came only from recognized teachers.

Table 18. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for evaluation.

Categories of Recommended Change	
Educators (n=185*)	**Recognized Educators (n=66*)**
1. More Stringent (45 comments: 24%)	1. Not Implemented (20 comments: 30%)
2. Not Working (37 comments: 20%)	2. Not Working (10 comments: 15%)
3. Other Evaluators (27 comments: 15%)	3. Needs Good Principal (8 comments: 12%)
4. Not Implemented (24 comments: 13%)	3. Evaluate Administrators (8 comments: 12%)
5. OK As Is (18 comments: 10%)	3. OK As Is (8 comments: 12%)
6. Evaluate Administrators (13 comments: 7%)	4. Other Evaluators (7 comments: 11%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Evaluation

Survey Question: **How would you change the current evaluation system?**

Make teachers and principals accountable. Do the paperwork and get rid of teachers that do not teach. Also, get rid of administrators and board office personnel who are not productive. (Teacher)

It appears that administrators are fearful of lawsuits or do not have time to adequately evaluate. So, I would work for legislation to address these problems so personnel would get "fair" evaluations without prejudice. This may go against what unions want, but in factories and other businesses this is done to ensure a good product, so we need to do the same to make our educational system better. (Recognized teacher)

The problem is not with the evaluation system. It is the protection given to personnel by state law and court cases. Most evaluation systems are too time consuming for the return. (Recognized principal)

The current evaluation system is dictated by laws, State Board policies and court decisions. Within this rigid framework we need to introduce some flexibility and individualization into the personnel evaluation system and align it with the system's goals/objectives, especially its curriculum and instructional programs, goals, and objectives. (Recognized superintendent)

The evaluation system is only as good as the principal. If the principal knows curriculum and is current in the education field — then there is a chance of an accurate evaluation. (Recognized teacher)

My school does a good job of evaluation. I am basing my answers above on what colleagues from other schools tell me. Perhaps, if we as educators cannot adequately evaluate ourselves, then probably an outside entity should do it. I also feel that there ought to be a way that teachers can evaluate principals and most certainly area superintendents and assistant superintendents. (Teacher)

Evaluation

Interviews:

Evaluation was an area of great concern for survey respondents, and was therefore included in the interview protocol. Interview subjects were asked to provide detail as to how they would change the evaluation system if they saw the need for change. (See Appendix B.) Accountability, a common theme among interview responses on evaluation, is discussed in the first two comments which follow. Some subjects reported that, in their particular school, the evaluation system was working well; the last quotation exemplifies their comments.

Interview Question: **If you were to make any changes to the evaluation system, or the methods of implementing that system, what would they be?**

"I would think more in terms of outcome based evaluations....Until we cannot tie our educational system to the legislature and to the school code, then we're not going to be able to truly evaluate people the way we need to evaluate them. It's like this: If we have a goal out there, then we need to have an objective that measures that goal. And then, we have to have numbers and after we have numbers, we have to ask, *What does that number say, and [does it] show progress or no progress?* That's the way you evaluate people....When you get down to the teacher level, again it comes down to this. You can do all those things in the classroom, but then you're going to deal with mandates. You're going to deal with all this stuff before you deal with the true facts of did your class progress. Did we have a growth chart? Do we have a chart that says in your class they started here and they ended here and this is a good growth pattern? Do we have any kind of pre- and post- way of telling where we started and how we got there?...If we're going to do it, let's look for some results. And, true hard results..." (Superintendent)

"No, I don't think it's fine....I think it needs to be more product-oriented. I think we all need to be held accountable for what we produce, or don't produce. In the current system, the evaluation doesn't do that. And I would recommend, if things were going to change, that we tie that in some way to our product." (Principal)

"I think it's hard for a principal to do a true evaluation on the teacher. It puts the principal on the spot and I think sometimes they evaluate too highly. I really do. I don't think they're as objective as they need to be. I think principals are out there just giving everybody a good evaluation. And I think they should be a little stricter....I've only known of one principal in all my years that gave a true evaluation to a teacher and that teacher just transferred to another building. So, I think the evaluation systems do need to be looked into. I think they need to be changed. And the evaluation systems now that are being used — I don't even like them. Teachers are evaluating themselves. Well, anybody can make up a good portfolio..." (Teacher)

"I don't think that there's any evaluation of teaching in the state right now....We do not look at what the teacher feels they've accomplished in the classroom. We do not have any check and balance on whether they've accomplished that in any way. We virtually don't have any on-site evaluation of the teachers' performance. It is basically all what the teacher said they did, in their own self-evaluation. I have no problem with self-evaluation but I do have a problem with the fact that we do not have any system right now where we actually have a structured examination of what is going on in each classroom." (Recognized teacher)

Evaluation

"Right now we've got a safety net. Anybody that wants to be a teacher can be so, and unless they do some horrendous crime — that's the only time they are dismissed from their job, and it has to be severe. It cannot be theft, it cannot be cheating, it cannot be lying, it has to be a horrendous crime to be dismissed from public education and those are based on facts, not on opinion. Right now we have our seniority net set up so that once you're in a school system, you pretty much hang in there. No matter what you do, you're not dismissed. You're not fired, and there's no reason or need for the teacher to do better, to want to do better....Right now the way we evaluate teachers is to no avail. I mean, you're evaluated and if you're just barely satisfactory, that's okay. If you're wonderful, that's okay, too. If you're horrible you're on an improvement plan for so many years. And if that doesn't work, you're on another improvement plan. There really are no high standards; there's no reward; there's no incentive; there is no reason other than in your heart and your own morals and your own values to do good." (Teacher)

"I would like to see outside evaluators as opposed to evaluators in the building. I don't know how that system could be implemented. I don't know who the best evaluator would be. I would prefer it be someone who is totally objective. And I would like to see it done more often. I think currently it's only done twice a year and an evaluator sits in my classroom for maybe half an hour to an hour during each of those two sessions, and I'm not sure that's enough, particularly for newer teachers." (Recognized teacher)

"The current system provides the opportunity for supervisors to either give a satisfactory or an unsatisfactory. And I don't think that is the most desirable way of evaluating folks. I think the evaluation system ought to provide a way of rewarding, at least in words, those people who are doing outstanding jobs and ways of notifying those people who are doing unsatisfactory jobs. I don't think our current system does that." (Recognized superintendent)

"Well, I was involved, somewhat, in developing the new system...and I had high hopes for it because I thought it was a major improvement over what we had been doing. I still think it's a major improvement over what we had been doing. But, it's still — in West Virginia — very difficult, if not impossible, to get rid of incompetent people. And that evaluation system still doesn't do it....I think the Phase 1 part of the evaluation is effective, I think it has potential to improve the competencies of the people, which is what I think an evaluation system ought to do. You know, I think that's what our major goal is — to look at people, identify their strengths and weaknesses, help them overcome those weaknesses. But, you also have a second part of an evaluation system that says that if those things don't improve over a reasonable period of...time, then you need to be able to do something to get rid of those people, or to replace those people, or to make things better for kids, and I still don't see that happening....I would love to get to the point of having teachers say, *We're going to police the ranks, and when we find people who are incompetent, we're going to take the steps to see that either they improve or they leave the profession.* And the same thing with administrators; I don't want to pick [on] just teachers, because I think we have the same problems with administrators, too. But I think we have to do some policing of our own ranks." (Recognized principal)

"Well, under my own personal experience, a lot of it probably has to do with the system; a lot of it has to do with the evaluator himself, and I have to say I'm pleased with it. We get good feedback from our administrators. We get to set our own goals, and I'm pleased with it." (Recognized teacher)

Personnel Assignment/Mentoring

Very few respondents agreed that the practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students (Table 19). Educators were slightly more positive about this practice than recognized educators, and not one of the recognized administrators was in favor of the priority given to seniority. Allowing transfers during the school year also received a low percentage of favorable responses, as did the overall system of personnel assignment. A larger proportion of superintendents appear to be in favor of the mentoring program than teachers. The overall favorable response rate was 28%.

Table 19. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on personnel assignment/mentoring.

Positive Statements Regarding Personnel Assignment/Mentoring	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students.	8%	13%	26%	0%	0%	11%
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences.	65%	28%	32%	63%	60%	46%
Negative Statements Regarding Personnel Assignment/Mentoring	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students.	12%	20%	33%	13%	27%	18%
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students.	23%	4%	29%	13%	13%	18%

Two very strong categories, both based on personnel assignment, emerged from the comments made in this area by all respondents (see Table 20). Collectively, 75% of those responding to the qualitative question expressed the belief that assignment of positions should be based either on the performance of the individual or less on seniority. A large proportion of comments from administrators focused on *Administrators' Discretion* (66% of the comments in this category were made by administrators) and *No Transfers* (50%).

Table 20. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for personnel assignment/mentoring.

Categories of Recommended Change	
Educators (n=176*)	**Recognized Educators (n=65*)**
1. Based on Performance (66 comments: 38%)	1. Less Seniority (33 comments: 51%)
2. Less Seniority (53 comments: 30%)	2. Based on Performance (27 comments: 42%)
3. No Change (21 comments: 12%)	3. Based on Needs (12 comments: 18%)
4. Administrators' Discretion (20 comments: 11%)	4. No Transfers (6 comments: 9%)
5. No Transfers (15 comments: 9%)	
6. Stronger Mentoring (13 comments: 7%)	

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Personnel Assignment/Mentoring

Survey Question: **What would you do differently in the area of assigning personnel to schools?**

Hire the best qualified applicant for the position. (Teacher)

I've always believed making assignments based on seniority breeds mediocrity. What to do differently is a complicated question. Perhaps a teacher's portfolio of staff development and peer evaluation could be useful. (Recognized teacher)

The legislation that dictates assignment of staff mimics a coal miner's contract. When dealing with the education of children, administration should have substantial discretion in placement. As long as personnel actions are not arbitrary or capricious, the management should be allowed to make changes in the interest of students. The personnel laws reflect the clout of [the] teachers' union in this state. (Superintendent)

School improvement efforts from school to school differ; [some schools] require new personnel to hold expertise that some schools do not require. Yet job descriptions usually are the same from school to school. Schools should be able to require training to meet the total school needs. (Recognized principal)

New assignments should take place at the beginning of the school year. If a substitute is required they should stay until the year is finished, especially in elementary. Some classes can have three persons in a year — that's horrible for young children. The substitute in a position should be given a mentor, also. (Recognized teacher)

There is no viable alternative to the present system, at present. However, if a more honest method of evaluating teachers is developed, I think it could be utilized. Future retirements may alleviate some of this problem. (Teacher)

New teachers would benefit from a year's internship. It is vital to train new teachers, but the present system allows them to flounder and hope they will emerge a strong teacher. (Teacher)

Personnel Assignment/Mentoring

Interviews:

Interview data reinforced survey findings that the assignment of personnel needs to have more emphasis on the demonstrated performance of the individual, and less emphasis on seniority. While ten of the 60 subjects expressed some understanding and support of the current system (see first two comments), most still pointed out drawbacks of the current weight placed on seniority.

Interview Question: **In your opinion, what criteria should be used in the hiring and assignment of teachers?**

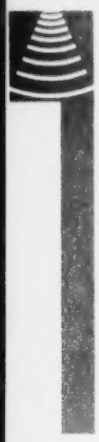
"A couple of decades ago when I was hired, teachers were interviewed personally and sometimes even hand picked for positions. And through the years, I have seen the seniority develop, which is probably in 98% of the cases the best way to do it — so that you get out the nepotism and the favoritism and sometimes the compassionate situations that will land people a job in the classroom — which isn't necessarily the place where they should be....Now, when I have been in this particular school for 17 years and feel quite comfortable, I think, as we see the new teachers come in, there still should be enough of an interview that allows that teacher to really know about the school, the type of children, the areas that they come from, the type of children that they will be working with, so that he or she feels comfortable in that position and it's not just a job. When you are working with human beings, you need to have that desire to be there every day from morning until quitting time, and I think we've taken some of that out of [the] placement of teachers due to seniority...so that when they get there, they're willing to give that one hundred percent, and they feel comfortable where they are and [are] not there because that was the position that was open and they needed to take it. Because I think our children deserve the best educators in those classrooms, wanting to be there." (Principal)

"I guess I'm one of these people who understands the concept of seniority, but I don't think it always guarantees the best teacher. And I understand why people say, *Well, you can't just pick the best teacher, because what criteria do you use?* But I think sometimes just because you've been doing something longer than somebody else does not make you a better teacher. And I've seen a lot of young,...dynamic people who cannot get the job because jobs are posted according to whatever the criteria for that job is, and then it's strictly seniority." (Recognized teacher)

"I think in placement you have to have something that I guess we might call contingency. If a person is going to go into a school they should be able to relate and work with that school faculty. The only way we can do that is through interviews and through knowledge of that person, and comparing them, and then matching them up. We're not allowed to do that. We have to go by qualifications and seniority....We need a little more flexibility. I am hammering at this county. I'm hammering away at that. And, it's hard. You're not very popular. They don't buy you ice cream cones. But, you have to do it." (Superintendent)

"Best qualified. I know what the code speaks to. But their definition of best qualified doesn't necessarily coincide with mine. I don't mind using the criteria that's set up now. I don't know that seniority has much to do with it, though. In many cases seniority becomes the overriding factor of the set of criteria in the current code. I don't know that you could take all the subjectivity out of something like that, but I think administrators need a little more flexibility in determining who the best qualified are....It just seems to be so inflexible at times that it ties your hands. I had a couple of cases in the last two or three years that did that to us. And I'm convinced that we didn't get the best qualified people, because of the seniority issue." (Principal)

Personnel Assignment/Mentoring



"A lot of times we put teachers into situations that they're not qualified or able to handle. I would like to be able to see that there is some kind of qualification system where teachers are in a place where they fit the need....The most senior teacher isn't always the teacher that's best qualified for that position. I guess I'm not a standard teacher in that sense, because everyone thinks the most senior teacher should be the one that gets the position, and I never really felt that....I would like to see some kind of system where there is a little bit of selection there. And there's a chance to make a selection for the best education of the kids." (Teacher)

"I really think that principals should have more flexibility in hiring people that they feel are the most qualified applicant for the job....I've had two different times in the last three years [when] I've had to hire teachers who were most senior, and came out on top on the rating scale, who weren't necessarily the most qualified individuals and both times they have not worked out. And they're on my staff now, and it's not that they're not good teachers, but they really aren't trained to do what we want them to do — and they aren't very enthusiastic about getting the training. So they're doing an adequate job, but they're really not capable of doing the kind of job I think they should be doing." (Recognized principal)

Funding

Funding received only 27% favorable responses (Table 21). Most respondents agreed with the necessity for extra funding for gifted and talented students and expressed the belief that excess levies should remain a county option.

Table 21. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on funding.

Positive Statements Regarding Funding	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Suprtndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Suprtndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.	0%	12%	16%	0%	0%	11%
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.	0%	4%	9%	0%	0%	4%
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.	67%	60%	49%	100%	60%	56%
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of special education students.	15%	52%	37%	0%	40%	45%
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.	22%	32%	28%*	25%	33%	40%
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.	8%	13%	16%*	13%	33%	19%*
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option; therefore, the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	67%	76%	67%	38%	60%	65%
Negative Statements Regarding Funding	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Suprtndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Suprtndnts.	Principals	Teachers
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	26%	8%	17%	13%	13%	11%
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.	41%	20%	9%*	25%	13%	10%*
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.	93%	80%	14%	100%	73%	20%
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	4%	21%	22%	0%	40%	20%

* This should be viewed as neither favorable nor unfavorable as a majority of responses were "No Opinion."

Funding

The qualitative analysis of responses to the question "*How would you change our present school finance system (within current budget constraints)?*" confirmed the quantitative results, with most responses falling in the category of *Revise Funding Formula* (Table 22). Within this category, two sub-categories were especially prevalent: *General Revisions* and *Changes in the Teacher/Pupil Ratio*. Rather than leaving the comment section blank (as some had done in previous areas), some respondents stated that they did not have sufficient knowledge to comment in this area. All comments recommending less funds for administrators were made by teachers and recognized teachers.

Table 22. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for funding.

Categories for Changes in Funding	
Educators (n=148*)	**Recognized Educators (n=52*)**
1. Revise Funding Formula (67 comments: 45%)	1. Revise Funding Formula (26 comments: 50%)
2. No Knowledge (24 comments: 16%)	2. Statewide Levy (8 comments: 15%)
3. Less for Administrators (14 comments: 9%)	3. No Knowledge (6 comments: 12%)
4. Statewide Levy (11 comments: 7%)	4. More Teachers (5 comments: 10%)
5. More Teachers (9 comments: 6%)	5. Less for Administrators (3 comments: 6%)
	5. Consolidate Schools (3 comments: 6%)

*The number of subjects who responded to this question

***Survey Question:* How would you change our present school finance system (within current budget constraints)?**

The entire formula needs to be revisited! (Recognized principal)

Number one problem — cut backs — the teacher/student ratio is very wrong. Should not count administrators, counselors, special education teachers in this figure. Should just be classroom teachers. Very unfair — too many cut backs on administrators and central office. (Principal)

I would like to see a statewide levy, with counties given equitable funding. (Teacher)

Our students have no electives — no teachers. The talented students in the arts are shut out due to the lack of teachers, yet we hire another person at the Board office to handle "Schools to Work." We have to earn money to pay bus drivers to take our special and regular students to work experience during the day. Is there something wrong with this picture? (Teacher)

Cut administrators/secretaries at the county office. We've been "over our limit" for a bunch of years on administrators, and we have a secretary for every one of them!! The secretaries need to combine duties. (Teacher)

Create larger schools to cut administrative costs. (Recognized principal)

Funding

Interviews:

Interviews also reflected the opinion of respondents that the funding formula needs major revisions. There were, however, eight educators who indicated that, in their particular situation, funding was adequate to meet the needs of the students, as illustrated by the first interview comment below:

Interview Question: **Based on your years of experience in the West Virginia education system, do you feel that current funding is adequate to meet the needs of the students? If not, what specific changes would you recommend?**

"I'm really not an expert in the funding area. But, I feel like in this school,...we have adequate funding to do what we need to do with our students, because we have a faculty senate that pools money and gets materials. Our county provides $150 per teacher for materials, and we're given opportunities to apply for grants....In my school, we've drawn in a lot of grants. And I feel like we have the materials; we have a principal who's willing to help us get materials." (Recognized teacher)

"I don't think the funding, currently, is adequate to meet the needs of students. There are demands made upon county systems to provide personnel to meet the...needs of special needs students, that might require individual aides; it requires extra buses; it requires extra teachers to meet [the] needs of individual students. [In some situations] one student requires three people, three personnel to handle the needs of that student. And the number of personnel that we need...is not provided in our current State Aid formula." (Recognized superintendent)

"Well, no I don't. The funding as it presently is set up is not adequate to meet the needs. I guess the two areas that are of concern to me would be mandates that are established by the legislature but that are unfunded. And I'm thinking particularly because it affects me directly, of the counseling situation in the state of West Virginia. We have a mandate that says counselors must be provided, but we don't have funding. And therefore, for example, in our particular location, we have one elementary counselor trying to serve ten elementary schools which is absolutely impossible. But, we meet the guidelines of having a counselor. If that mandate had been funded, then I think we would have sufficient counselors....The other concern that I have regarding funding, which I think is improving, but is far from what it ought to be,...is facilities. I happen to be located in an old facility, which is a wonderful facility; it just needs lots of upgrading, and we need to have funds provided so that we can do that because I think we're going to be using this building for a long, long time. But in order to use it for a long, long time, it needs to be maintained." (Recognized principal)

"My answer is no. I think there needs to be what we have historically referred to as a statewide excess levy, which would pull every county, every group of citizens in the state into an equal footing with respect to their part of exercising their responsibilities for equally contributing to the overall funding of education in the state. I think that would be more fair for many of the counties where citizens historically have gone above and beyond the state required levy to support the schools. And I think that, given the court mandates in all of the thrusts that we're making in the state in the area of equity, realizing that every child in every school, not withstanding where they live, deserves an opportunity for a high quality education." (Recognized teacher)

"I think that, being from a larger county and a growing county, we need to look at funding a little bit differently because our enrollment is increasing where a lot of the southern part of the state is decreasing. And I think that a lot of times we're short changed...That's been brought to the attention of the legislature and they're working on that, but that's probably one area where we could make a real positive impact. Look at student population and the growth trend that's there, and look at figures — the data that's available on that. And then somehow work our pupil funding differently so that we can address the larger counties." (Recognized teacher)

Funding

"The answer is no, it isn't. And the reasons are one, the excess levy never has been passed in the state, which creates a major problem in how the funds are distributed throughout the state. Secondly, the present system rewards those county systems who haven't taken the initiative to pass an excess levy, because they get the money for teachers anyway. And thirdly, within the steps of the formula there's often too much tampering that goes on that allows money to be used for things other than what those steps are created for." (Recognized superintendent)

"The answer is no. There are a variety of changes that need to be made, in my opinion. The first and foremost problem is with the excess levies and the amount of resources available to students among the counties. There is a wide disparity in the amount of money available from district-to-district, and that's brought about, not by operation of the school-aid formula, necessarily, but by operation of the excess levy....So then, the first thing that would have to be done is that there would have to be a mechanism established to get some parity, some equity in terms of finance, so that counties that are rural, that are sparsely populated, that have no excess levy — those are the ones that are in dire straits....The recent Robinson case, the old Recht decision, the Pauley v. Kelly case, however you want it defined, says that every step of the formula is inadequate, and it is. The school-aid formula is not designed to provide all the resources that are needed to run a school system. It's contemplated that there be other local revenues raised, but legislators have figured out a way to capture all that local growth so that we get reappraisals, so we don't benefit from it. If the formula had remained the same as it was in 1991, we would have had over a half-million dollars of new revenue for this system next year. But guess who gets the half-million dollars? The state of West Virginia. And they're plowing that into teacher retirements, so that on a macro level, what has happened is that we've been throwing all the expanded resources — the new tax base, reappraisals and everything else that's primarily come from the local levy — that's been put into the teacher retirement like a black hole.... If you want to look at the total picture, you could say that the money spent on public education K-12 has expanded considerably in the last ten years, but if you'll look at how that has expanded, it's been primarily in teacher salaries, PEIA (Public Employees Insurance Agency), and in retirement, rather than in instructional programs. If you'll look at spending, in terms of the number of teachers — that's down, and the number of service personnel is down. So there is a terrible thing that's happened. We're squeezing ourselves — we've cannibalized ourselves in order to give raises." (Recognized superintendent)

Transportation

In many cases, statements concerning transportation received a response of "No Opinion." Most respondents, however, responded negatively when it came to the reimbursement of transportation costs for private school attendance (Table 23). Overall, transportation comments were 16% positive, 45% no opinion, and 39% negative. The area of transportation was not included in the interview process, despite the low percentage of favorable responses, because of the large number of survey respondents with no opinion on this subject.

Table 23. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to statements on transportation.

Positive Statements Regarding Transportation	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.	12%	32%	22%*	0%	33%	28%
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.	56%	44%	32%	0%	20%	29%
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute drivers.	4%	16%*	8%*	0%	0%*	14%*
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers' dollars.	12%	4%	8%	25%	13%	2%
Negative Statements Regarding Transportation	**Strongly Disagree + Disagree**					
	Educators			**Recognized Educators**		
	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts	Principals	Teachers
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.	4%	4%*	7%*	13%	13%	8%*

* This should be viewed as neither favorable nor unfavorable as a majority of responses were "No Opinion."

In response to the question, "*What changes (both organizational and financial) would you recommend to improve West Virginia's current school transportation system?*" comments fell into the categories listed in Table 24.

Table 24. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for transportation.

Categories of Recommended Change	
Educators (n=88*)	**Recognized Educators (n=23*)**
1. Bus Drivers (23 comments: 26%)	1. Regionalize (9 comments: 39%)
2. Change Formula (14 comments: 16%)	2. Contract Services (6 comments: 26%)
3. No Private Support (13 comments: 15%)	3. Change Formula (5 comments: 22%)
4. More for Sparse Counties (11 comments: 13%)	3. Bus Drivers (5 comments: 22%)
5. Contract Services (10 comments: 11%)	4. No Private Support (3 comments: 13%)
5. Regionalize (10 comments: 11%)	
6. Transport to Closest School (8 comments: 9%)	

*The number of subjects who responded to this question.

Transportation

Survey Question: **What changes (both organizational and financial) would you recommend to improve West Virginia's current school transportation system?**

Make bus drivers work a full day since they are being paid for one. They can work in the schools. I don't think they should make EVEN MORE for field trips. Teachers don't. (Teacher)

Regional education service agencies could provide for heavy-complex maintenance of school buses, (e.g., engine, transmission replacement, and major rebuilding) with counties having responsibility for minor maintenance functions, operator preventive maintenance, etc. This could promote efficiencies in parts procurement, training of competent mechanics, parts rebuilding, redistribution of transportation assets among the counties. (Recognized superintendent)

Allocate bus drivers to counties on a need basis, rather than the present per-pupil method. Reimburse full costs of necessary costs instead of the current 80 percent, or use a formula based on sparsity. Raise substitute allowance to 35 percent, which is the state average (approximately). (Recognized superintendent)

Abolish direct reimbursement of parents' transportation costs whose children attend private schools. Abolish paying parents to take children to different schools in lieu of bus. (Teacher)

Transport children only to their closest schools. (Teacher)

It will never happen but I see nothing wrong with contract drivers. It is sad when a driver works two hours a day and is paid for eight; then an emergency happens and you can't find the driver to get the students home because he is working another job. (Recognized principal)

Miscellaneous

Statements labeled as miscellaneous were in no way intended to imply a lack of importance. They were included in this section because all previous statements directly pertained to the present educational system. The items shown in Table 25 were thought to be of interest to West Virginia professional educators, but are not intended to be an evaluation of the current system. Recognized superintendents appear to be the only group strongly in favor of increasing the school day. Both superintendents and recognized superintendents responded favorably to a longer school year. Conversely, recognized superintendents provided less favorable responses than superintendents concerning year-round education. The majority of professional educators expressed the opinion that unfunded mandates create a problem, and the additional use of team teaching would be beneficial to the students. More superintendents expressed the opinion that teachers meet frequently to coordinate activities than did principals or teachers.

Table 25. Percentage of educators and recognized educators who responded favorably to miscellaneous statements.

Miscellaneous Statements	Strongly Agree + Agree					
	Educators			Recognized Educators		
	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers	Superintndnts.	Principals	Teachers
A longer school day would increase student learning.	22%	24%	8%	75%	14%	13%
A longer school year would increase student learning.	63%	32%	29%	88%	43%	33%
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.	52%	48%	35%	38%	57%	50%
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.	15%	8%	10%	25%	7%	2%
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	70%	60%	48%	75%	47%	44%
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.	59%	60%	67%	75%	86%	70%

Reform Priorities

The final question of the survey asked respondents for the three most important changes they would make to the present system to improve the quality of education provided to West Virginia's public school students. Responses to these comments were analyzed in a similar manner to other qualitative responses. Each priority was labeled and grouped according to the general topic (category) in which it fell. Categories were then ranked according to the number and value (first, second, or third priority) of each comment. Table 26 shows the top ten categories that emerged from this analysis. These top priorities further emphasize the previous findings. *Funding* and *Teacher Quality* (including hiring, evaluation, and dismissal procedures) are obvious concerns among all professional educators in West Virginia. The category of *Teacher Training* included comments on both pre-service and professional development. *Calendar Changes* (including longer school day, longer school year, and restructuring of the day), *Upgrade Profession*, and *Parental/Community Involvement* were categories which emerged for recognized educators but not for educators. Likewise, many more educators expressed concern over problems with inclusion, the need for alternative schools, and more counselors (these comments were all grouped in the category of *Special Needs*). Other categories found in the educators' top ten but not in those of recognized educators were *Teacher Incentives* (including pay, time, and retirement issues), and *Discipline*.

Table 26. Educators' and recognized educators' top recommendations for educational reform.

Educators (630 recommendations*)	Recognized Educators (199 recommendations*)
1. Funding (70 comments: 11%)	1. Teacher Quality (28 comments: 14%)
2. Teacher Quality (65 comments: 10%)	2. Funding (23 comments: 12%)
3. Special Needs (50 comments: 8%)	3. Teacher Training (19 comments: 10%)
4. Governance (45 comments: 7%)	4. Calendar Changes (18 comments: 9%)
5. Smaller Classes/More Personnel (43 comments: 7%)	4. Governance (18 comments: 9%)
6. Teacher Incentives (39 comments: 6%)	5. Upgrade Profession (17 comments: 9 %)
7. Student Accountability (38 comments: 6%)	6. Technology (15 comments: 8%)
8. Technology (36 comments: 6%)	7. Smaller Classes/More Personnel (11 comments: 6%)
9. Teacher Training (28 comments: 4%)	8. Student Accountability (10 comments: 5%)
10. Discipline (26 comments: 4%)	9. Parental/Community Involvement (7 comments: 4%)

*This represents the total number of recommendations made by respondents in this group.

Reform Priorities

Survey Question: **In order of priority, please list and briefly discuss the three most important changes that you would make to the present system to improve the quality of education provided to West Virginia's public school students:**

Placement of teachers based on qualifications and evaluations instead of seniority; those not meeting standards should be removed instead of "tolerated." (Recognized teacher)

It is only reasonable to expect that in order to provide the best education possible to students that funding is a priority. The unfunded mandates placed upon county school systems are ruining the educational opportunities for students. Because counties are trying to meet "all" of the mandates, they can't even provide a really good basic education anymore. It is unreasonable to demand that someone do something without providing them with the tools which are necessary to complete the project. If the school system is expected to provide specific learning opportunities they should be given the resources with which to provide these opportunities to students. (Superintendent)

Special Education students need more time and instruction in the special education classroom. I cannot do my job and students cannot learn in a fragmented situation. Special Education students are taking the majority of my time, leaving precious little for the other students. (Teacher)

Restructuring of the school day: A longer day or school year will not achieve the desired goals, because it means more of the same. The teacher's day must include common planning times with other teachers (something I've never had in all my years of teaching). If teachers are to be held accountable, then more planning time must be provided for and with other teachers! Team teachers should be fostered at the upper levels by providing the support structure necessary for it to exist. Examine the video "Polishing the Stone" which looks at some Asian schools where teacher planning is done in a common room with other colleagues. (Recognized teacher)

Provide additional personnel to provide services to the students we have that require so much care — health, behavioral, and academic. (Recognized superintendent)

Provide more incentives (extra duty pay) for teachers who "volunteer" their time to help improve the overall school program. (Principal)

Respect for the teaching profession! Respect can be shown by professional pay as well as by listening to teacher's opinions. Parents/Joe Public have more say than the teachers who are in the classroom day after day. If teachers felt respected, it would revolutionize the profession! And who would benefit? Students! (Recognized teacher)

We must seek a way to make student achievement a priority, not only in funding and control but in the classroom, and accountability is the only way to do it. From the legislature to the custodian. (Superintendent)

Technology for students, combined with adequate training of staff and proper supervision by administrators, from county to the school level, ensuring implementation. (Recognized principal)

More reinforcement for discipline (parents need to provide more support on this). Disruptive students should not be allowed to remain if they cannot act the way that assures the best education for the majority. (Teacher)

Teacher training — teachers need to be kept abreast of the best techniques available. Teachers need time to absorb material and encouragement and support to implement these best techniques. (Teacher)

Require schools to be truly managed by principals and teachers at the individual school level. (Recognized principal)

Reform Priorities

The legislature should ensure that some responsibility for learning and behavior rests with the student and his parents. Students should be required to behave at school. If they can't, the parents and the county (or state) should have to provide alternative education away from well-behaved students. Good behavior must be re-visited in schools. (Recognized principal)

Interviews:

Interview subjects suggesting priorities for educational reform further expounded upon the areas mentioned in the survey. Funding was, by far, the most prevalent reform issue mentioned in the interviews, with teacher quality, teacher preparation, staff development, teacher incentives, and site-based management (governance) also receiving many comments. Comments on funding, personnel evaluation, and personnel assignment reiterated what has already been reported in the previous sections on those specific issues; hence, additional comments regarding these three educational areas will not be presented here. Below, the question from the interview protocol (see Appendix B) is offered, followed by some interview comments that dealt with other issues.

Our final question on the survey asked for the three most important changes that you would make to the present system to improve the quality of education provided to West Virginia's public school students. As there was limited space on the survey, we would like to hear more detail about your recommendations.
Would you please restate the changes that you would like to see made and go into detail concerning those changes?

"I noticed in the survey there was no area, I don't think, that addressed pre-service teachers. In other words, ...I think that...more correlation between the public school system and the university level [is needed]. I know they come in and they do their student teaching, but most student teachers will tell you, even student teaching is a shock for those teachers. When they come out of that and they get a job, it's an even bigger shock. And it shouldn't be. There should be transition in there so they'll know what to expect." (Recognized teacher)

"I don't get many new people coming into our school as employees, but do get lots of student teachers. And, I see people coming in unprepared. I see people coming in and I'm saying...*Why did they ever get into an education program?* And I think we need to have our colleges and universities do a better job, number one, with the screening to get into these programs, and number two, providing them with a better background in preparing them to do the job....It bothers me when a student, or a teacher, or a student teacher comes in and just doesn't have the background in a subject matter area,...and I think this is where the Education Departments are really bombing out. It's that these people are not prepared to handle the routine kinds of things like discipline, like curriculum development, like teaching techniques, like strategies for working with a variety of children....And I do a lot of work with administrative interns, and that kind of thing, and surprisingly I see a lot of the same kinds of things there. They are going into administration, and don't have the background and skills to handle those kinds of things." (Recognized principal)

"Things are changing very, very fast in this world — and all of us know that. And education is no exception. And they change so fast that a teacher trained five years ago is out of date today if there isn't some kind of good, effective, on-going in-service kind of training for teachers. And we don't have sufficient time. Time is money — time and money to do the kind of training that we need. And technology is an excellent example of an area in which things change so quickly that teachers need to be up-to-date and familiar with current technology that they can use, not only to teach it to students, but to use to teach students....I think another of our primary needs is more time somewhere in the teachers' work schedule, whether that's created by expanding teachers to a 210 [day] year with ten days scattered in the year for in-service or staff development." (Recognized superintendent)

"Something that I feel is very, very important is staff development. I think we need to make sure that we equip the teachers with the necessary skills, the necessary instructional strategies and techniques, and I think staff

development is probably one of the greatest things that — one of the most important things we can do for our teachers." (Recognized teacher)

"I'm fortunate that I have gotten a lot of 'pats on the back' for what I do, but there are a lot of better teachers than myself who don't get the pat on the back....So I would like to see some kind of a system that rewards teachers to motivate them to keep on improving, because a lot of times they feel *no one pays any attention to me, so I'm not going to do anything better than I'm doing*. And everyone can improve and, I think, would improve if they were motivated more." (Teacher)

"The site-based management concept, I think, is wonderful. I think that when you get the staff in a school excited about a program or what they're doing and have ownership of it and develop it, it's going to thrive....Four years ago we got involved in High Schools at Work program and that was a teacher generated, tailored to our school, program that has turned this place around, and it's turned it around mainly because our staff said *this is what we need to do for us*." (Principal)

The recommendation of one of our states' recognized educators integrates all three priorities into one solution. We ask the reader to imagine West Virginia's schools of the 21st century if this dream became a reality:

"OK. This is a pipe dream answer. First of all, you increase the starting salary, and you increase the ladder. You increase the salary to an extremely competitive rate with other professional positions. I don't ever think it's going to come to the level you're going to approach the salary of a doctor or a lawyer, but you certainly need to increase the ability for an educator to come into a profession and be a professional....

The second thing you do, is make it tough for a person to come through college and attain that degree. Now, people come through and they attain that engineering degree, and they get that doctor certificate, and, you know, lawyers pass their bar, but they work hard because they know that there's reward for them — financial reward. You talk about the aesthetic joys of teaching, and there are many, but when you go to college, many people look at the financial reward at the end of the track. If you're going to have a tremendously good financial reward, then you don't make that degree attainable to everybody. You make people work for that....The qualifications for pre-service should be increased tremendously....Teachers are our own worst enemy. We've got teachers out there that shouldn't be teaching. We have teachers out there that are ill-prepared; they can't control the classroom; they don't know their content. I'm not talking about the majority of teachers, but there's enough of them out there that it creates a bad public relations image....[So] you make pre-service tough, so you're putting out quality individuals. And,...you give them support along the way in that pre-service program, too. Nobody comes out that first year and is a wonderful teacher. That first year of teaching, you know, generally it's sink or swim. When I talk about pre-service, that even goes along with your first year of teaching, where you're given a tremendous support system. You don't put a science teacher in this kind of situation where you say *Teach 170 kids, make sure you're doing science fifty percent of the time hands-on*, and then you put them in a room like this. That's not how you support a teacher.

Now the third thing you do is...institute a very tough, objective evaluation system. That is where I'd like to see people come in who don't know me, don't know these people across the hall,...and spend time in the classroom. And they see what's going on and see what works and what doesn't work. And then at that point, the tough evaluation system doesn't mean *you gotta get out of here*; it means *you have these problems, here's what you need to do to fix them*, and you give support to do that. Now, if they don't make the changes they need to, then you get rid of them. And can you do that? Administrators say, *Aw, you can't get rid of people*. Yes, you can get rid of people. The problem is you have to spend so much time in giving them the assistance to improve [and] in documenting everything you do. Administrators don't do that, in their defense, because they don't have the time to do that. If you're listening to this and you're trying to figure out, well, 'what were the three things?' Raise that salary; make the pre-service tough; and very, very strict and fair evaluations. And I think you'd have a tremendous change in the education system. That's the pipe dream answer." (Recognized teacher)

Conclusions

This study was designed to elicit the opinions of West Virginia professional educators regarding 12 different areas of the K-12 educational system. We also sought to summarize the top priorities for educational reform, as recommended by professional educators. The original sample included approximately 1,200 professional educators. Of that sample, 384 returned the written questionnaire. Additionally, 60 interviews were conducted.

Professional educators consisted of two different groups: those who had received awards in the past ten years, and a random sample of the entire population. Results were examined separately for these two groups (recognized educators and educators), and also examined by position (superintendents, principals, and teachers). Analysis of quantitative data showed that recognized educators were slightly more positive than educators; and superintendents and principals were more positive than teachers in most areas except for personnel assignment and funding. Table 27 shows the collective results of the quantitative analysis for each area, with a summary of the most representative recommendations for change.

Top priorities for educational reform validated the results of the quantitative analysis. When recommendations for change in the West Virginia education system were grouped into categories, the top category for recognized educators and second highest for educators was *Teacher Quality* as it is influenced by teacher hiring, placement, evaluation, and dismissal procedures. Recommendations calling for change in *Funding* were the highest priority of educators and second highest for recognized educators, with the greatest number of revisions being called for in the area of teacher/pupil ratio.

Interview results also confirmed the other sources of information, with subjects expressing the belief that personnel assignment should place more emphasis on performance of the individual. The majority of subjects also felt that the evaluation process needs to be more stringent, and that funding is not adequate to meet the needs of the students.

In summary, West Virginia's educators were asked how they would improve the system. In order to make the findings as reliable and valid as possible, many different groups of educators participated and many different modes of inquiry were used. Through all queries, the message received was consistent: West Virginia professional educators who took part in this study feel that changes which would most improve the quality of education for public school students would be in the areas of personnel procedures (both assignment and evaluation) and in funding.

The voices of experience have spoken. Those professionals who directly work for, and are the most knowledgeable of, West Virginia's educational system have shared their collective wisdom. The message suggests that, while significant reforms have been implemented which demonstrate the state's commitment to providing a high quality education for every student, there remain myriad substantive areas where improvements are appropriate.

Conclusions

Table 27. Educational areas included in the survey, with percentages of overall responses and representative comments in each area.

Educational Area	% Favorable	% Un-favorable	% No Opinion	Summary of Qualitative Comments
Staff Development	56%	37%	7%	Staff development would be strengthened if it were tailored to the needs of the individual schools, teachers and students.
Curriculum & Graduation Requirements	50%	35%	15%	Curricular guidelines need to afford teachers more flexibility, but be more stringent in their requirements of the students.
Financial Management	49%	27%	24%	Better planning and fiscal oversight were recommended.
Governance	46%	30%	24%	Governance may be improved by regionalization of administration, coupled with greater autonomy at the school level.
Consolidation	43%	37%	20%	Each school and district should be considered individually when planning for consolidation, with elementary schools kept small and in the community.
Computers	42%	46%	12%	More computer access is recommended for both the teachers and the students. Teachers need more quality training.
Inclusion	37%	56%	7%	Inclusion has become too much of a blanket policy to the point of being detrimental to the regular education students. Each case should be considered individually, and more preparation and support provided for the teachers.
Teacher Incentives	34%	53%	13%	Suggested incentives provided to teachers include monetary supplements, recognition, and pay for performance.
Evaluation	32%	57%	11%	The evaluation system is not working efficiently and should be more stringent, with the possibility of other evaluators (peers or outside evaluators).
Personnel Assignment/ Mentoring	28%	52%	20%	Personnel assignment should be based more on the performance of the individual, with less priority on seniority.
Funding	27%	43%	30%	Inadequacies in current funding formula require revision, with an emphasis on changing the allowances for personnel, and consideration for the individual needs of each county.
Transportation*	16%	39%	45%	Current bus driver work schedule needs revision. Transportation may be better handled at a regional level or if contracted out.

*Note. Due to low percentage of comments in this area, recommendations should be viewed with caution (see Appendix D).

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Glossary of Terms

Adjusted Enrollment - The net enrollment plus twice the number of pupils enrolled for special education, including exceptional gifted, plus the number of students in grades nine through twelve enrolled for honors, advanced placement and gifted programs. No pupil may be counted more than three times for the purpose of determining adjusted enrollment.

Faculty Senate - A legislatively mandated organization at all public schools in West Virginia, which is comprised of all permanent, full-time professional educators who are its voting members. Created in 1990, Faculty Senate responsibilities include disbursement of certain allocated funds, input into the school's hiring process, nomination of educators for recognition and making recommendations regarding curriculum and other pertinent issues related to the instructional programs.

Instructional Goals and Objectives for WV Schools, 1996 - This publication contains specific grade level instructional goals and objectives for use in promoting student success throughout West Virginia. The document covers Kindergarten - Grade twelve for the following subject areas: (1) English Language Arts; (2) Mathematics; (3) Science; and (4) Social Studies.

Local Share - This is the amount of property tax revenue which is produced by levies, at specified rates, on all real property located in a county. Local share, therefore, represents each county's contribution to education costs on the basis of the value of its real property. State funding is provided to each county in an amount equal to the difference between the basic foundation program allowances and the local share.

Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) - LSICs are local school decision making councils which were established statutorily in 1990. They include representation from the school staff, service personnel, community, businesses, parents and where age appropriate, students. LSICs promote innovations and improvements in the environment for teaching and learning at each school in the state.

Net Enrollment - The number of pupils enrolled in special education programs, kindergarten programs and grades one to twelve, inclusive of the public schools of the county. It also includes certified adults enrolled in regular secondary vocational programs.

Property Tax Excess Levies - As provided for in West Virginia's Constitution (Article X, section 10), counties are authorized to increase, by as much as 100%, the maximum levy rates allowable for public schools. These increases are called excess levies and they must be approved by a majority vote. They are valid for up to five years. The excess levy revenues are not included as part of the local share of the basic foundation program and are not equalized. This means that, to the extent a county has an excess levy in effect, it does not share the additional money generated with the other counties.

Public School Support Program - Commonly called the "State Aid Funding Formula" or "School Aid Formula," the basic foundation program consists of the total computed costs (allowances) for each of the following seven categories: (1) professional educators; (2) service personnel; (3) fixed charges; (4) transportation costs; (5) administrative costs; (6) other current expenses, substitute employees, and faculty senates; and (7) improvement of instructional programs.

Glossary of Terms

Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) - West Virginia has established eight Regional Education Service Agencies in order to facilitate equality in the education offerings among the fifty-five (55) counties. Each agency seeks to assist the counties they serve in the following ways: (1) deliver high quality programs at lower per student cost; (2) reduce administrative and/or operational costs; (3) implement a uniform, integrated regional computer information system; (4) develop and implement staff development programs; and (5) provide any other education or support services as deemed appropriate.

School Building Authority - The state agency was established in 1988 for the purpose of providing funds for the construction and maintenance of school facilities to meet the educational needs of the people of West Virginia in an efficient and economical manner.

Seniority - The seniority of classroom teachers in West Virginia is determined on the basis of the length of time the employee has been working as a regular full-time certified and/or licensed professional educator by the local county board of education. It is granted in all areas that the employee is certified and/or licensed. Employment for a full employment term equals one year of seniority. When one or more permanently employed instructional personnel apply for a classroom teaching position and meet the standards set forth in the job posting, the county board of education makes decisions affecting the filling of such positions on the basis of the following criteria established by statute: (1) appropriate certification and/or licensure; (2) total amount of teaching experience; (3) the existence of teaching experience in the required certification area; (4) degree level in the required certification area; (5) specialized training directly related to the performance of the job as stated in the job description; (6) receiving an overall rating of satisfactory in evaluations over the previous two years; and (7) seniority. Consideration is to be given to each criterion with each criterion being given equal weight in the evaluation of each respective applicant's overall qualifications.

Unfunded Mandates - Program costs which counties are required to provide without receiving explicit funding from the School Aid Formula are commonly referred to as unfunded mandates.

Appendix A
EDUCATOR SURVEY

Name_____

Subject area taught (if departmentalized)_____

Years experience in: Education_____
Present position_____
West Virginia System_____

Please circle the response that best applies to you.

Position: Superintendent Principal/Asst. Principal Teacher

Type of school: Elementary Middle/Junior High High School

Type of community: Rural Small town Suburban Urban

Please indicate your degree of agreement/disagreement with the following statements by circling SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=No Opinion, D=Disagree, or SD=Strongly Disagree.

Staff Development	
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers.	SA A N D SD
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge.	SA A N D SD
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received.	SA A N D SD
Staff development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom.	SA A N D SD
What would you do (within current budget constraints) to change the staff development provided in your school?	
Computers	
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier.	SA A N D SD
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers.	SA A N D SD
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized.	SA A N D SD
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement.	SA A N D SD
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers.	SA A N D SD
How would you (within current budget constraints) change the way computers are used in the schools?	

Evaluation	
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals and superintendents).	SA A N D SD
Many personnel never really get any evaluation.	SA A N D SD
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing.	SA A N D SD
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills.	SA A N D SD
How would you change the current evaluation system?	

Teacher Incentives	
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best.	SA A N D SD
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers.	SA A N D SD
The current system of salary increases is equitable.	SA A N D SD
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve.	SA A N D SD
What kind of incentive system would you provide to personnel (within current budget constraints)?	

Personnel Assignment/Mentoring	
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students.	SA A N D SD
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students.	SA A N D SD
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences.	SA A N D SD
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students.	SA A N D SD
What would you do differently in the area of assigning personnel to schools?	

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements	
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	SA A N D SD
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.	SA A N D SD
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.	SA A N D SD
New Instructional Goals and Objectives published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provides standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	SA A N D SD
What kind of curricular guidelines would you provide to teachers?	

Governance	
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	SA A N D SD
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	SA A N D SD
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	SA A N D SD
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.	SA A N D SD
The present system of governance is not working well.	SA A N D SD
How would you change the current system of governing the schools?	

Inclusion	
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	SA A N D SD
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.	SA A N D SD
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.	SA A N D SD
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	SA A N D SD
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.	SA A N D SD
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.	SA A N D SD
How would you realistically (within current budget constraints) provide for the needs of special education students?	

Funding	
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.	SA A N D SD
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.	SA A N D SD
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.	SA A N D SD
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	SA A N D SD
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of the special education students.	SA A N D SD
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.	SA A N D SD
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.	SA A N D SD
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.	SA A N D SD
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.	SA A N D SD
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option, therefore the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	SA A N D SD
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	SA A N D SD
How would you change our present school finance system (within current budget constraints)?	
Financial Management	
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.	SA A N D SD
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.	SA A N D SD
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	SA A N D SD
What are the most important budgeting strategies the counties should employ to ensure their continued fiscal integrity and financial soundness?	

Consolidation	
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	SA A N D SD
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.	SA A N D SD
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.	SA A N D SD
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.	SA A N D SD
If you do not believe that the present consolidation plan is best for the students, what would you recommend as an alternative?	

Transportation	
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.	SA A N D SD
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.	SA A N D SD
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.	SA A N D SD
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute bus drivers.	SA A N D SD
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers dollars.	SA A N D SD
What changes (both organizational and financial) would you recommend to improve West Virginia's current school transportation system?	

Miscellaneous	
A longer school day would increase student learning.	SA A N D SD
A longer school year would increase student learning.	SA A N D SD
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.	SA A N D SD
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.	SA A N D SD
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	SA A N D SD
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.	SA A N D SD

In order of priority, please list and briefly discuss the three most important changes that you would make to the present system to improve the quality of education provided to West Virginia's public school students.

Appendix B

EDUCATOR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

As you know, The West Virginiă Education Fund* is conducting a study to determine what changes West Virginia Educators would make in our public school education system. You were previously sent a written survey. I brought along a blank copy of the survey just to refresh your memory. **(Give them survey).** We are now doing some interviews to get more in-depth information concerning some of the responses and recommendations that were included in the survey. What you say here will be kept strictly confidential. Your name will in no way be connected with your responses. No one but the two researchers at the fund will be able to connect your name to your responses. If you don't mind, we would like to tape this so that we can have an accurate record of your statements. You will only be identified by a number on the tape. It will be good if you do not mention your school or location, but any mention of such identifying information will be omitted in the editing process. **(Start tape, say interview number).**

As I said before, the purpose of the interviews is to get more detail than people were able to provide in the survey. One section of the survey dealt with funding issues. Based on your years of experience in the West Virginia education system, do you feel that current funding is adequate to meet the needs of the students? If not, what specific changes would you recommend?

Another section of the survey asked about the evaluation system. If you were to make any changes to the evaluation system, or the methods of implementing that system, what would they be?

In the survey we also asked about the issue of teacher placement. In your opinion, what criteria should be used in the hiring and assignment of teachers?

Our final question on the survey asked for the three most important changes that you would make to the present system to improve the quality of education provided to West Virginia's public school students. As there was limited space on the survey, we would like to hear more detail about your recommendations. Would you please restate the changes that you would like to see made and go into detail concerning those changes.

Are there any other issues (either from the survey or in addition to the survey) that you would like to address?

*Effective July 1997, the organization's name was changed to The Education Alliance.

Appendix C

Frequency and Percentage of Responses by Position

Table C:1. Frequency and Percentage of Responses by Teachers

Staff Development	SA* #(%)	A* #(%)	N* #(%)	D* #(%)	SD* #(%)
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers	20(8)	61(25)	7(3)	112(47)	41(17)
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge	23(10)	118(49)	11(5)	65(27)	25(10)
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received	23(10)	98(41)	18(8)	86(36)	15(6)
Staff development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom	18(8)	92(39)	17(7)	95(40)	16(7)
Computers					
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier	20(8)	74(31)	43(18)	76(32)	25(11)
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers	16(6)	77(32)	16(7)	89(37)	45(19)
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized	40(17)	114(48)	20(8)	44(18)	22(9)
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement	18(8)	114(48)	63(26)	35(15)	10(4)
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers	25(11)	88(38)	31(13)	80(35)	8(3)
Evaluation					
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals and superintendents)	3(1)	9(4)	26(11)	108(46)	91(38)
Many personnel never really get any evaluation	31(13)	75(32)	37(16)	77(33)	17(7)
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing	25(11)	84(35)	26(11)	86(36)	16(7)
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills	5(2)	45(19)	37(16)	115(49)	35(15)
Teacher Incentives					
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best	5(2)	47(20)	43(18)	103(44)	39(17)
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers	25(11)	83(35)	49(21)	67(29)	11(5)
The current system of salary increases is equitable	3(1)	56(24)	22(9)	86(36)	69(29)
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve	8(3)	68(29)	25(11)	104(44)	31(13)
Personnel Assignment/Mentoring					
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students	34(14)	95(40)	31(13)	66(28)	12(5)
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students	9(4)	55(23)	45(19)	93(39)	37(16)
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences	8(3)	68(29)	82(35)	60(25)	20(8)
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students	21(9)	69(29)	77(33)	60(25)	10(4)

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Curriculum & Graduation Requirements					
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	42(18)	148(62)	16(7)	25(11)	7(3)
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.	38(16)	109(46)	38(16)	51(21)	3(1)
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.	29(12)	75(32)	34(14)	94(40)	5(2)
New Instructional Goals and Objectives published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provides standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	11(5)	101(44)	71(31)	39(17)	10(4)
Governance					
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	7(3)	101(44)	69(30)	43(19)	11(5)
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	7(3)	93(41)	73(32)	42(19)	12(5)
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	24(10)	75(33)	70(30)	54(23)	8(4)
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.	16(7)	120(52)	32(14)	45(20)	16(7)
The present system of governance is not working well.	14(6)	57(25)	89(39)	62(27)	4(2)
Inclusion					
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	13(5)	100(42)	21(9)	69(29)	36(15)
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.	70(29)	111(46)	9(4)	44(18)	5(2)
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.	14(6)	126(53)	23(10)	61(25)	16(7)
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	96(41)	94(40)	18(8)	26(11)	3(1)
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.	4(2)	13(5)	8(3)	113(47)	103(43)
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.	29(13)	45(20)	34(15)	98(42)	26(11)
Funding					
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.	5(2)	33(14)	57(24)	84(36)	57(24)
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.	1(0)	21(9)	67(28)	84(36)	63(27)
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.	21(9)	96(41)	45(19)	49(21)	26(11)
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	23(10)	73(31)	101(43)	34(14)	5(2)
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of the special education students.	9(4)	79(34)	59(25)	66(28)	23(10)
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.	3(1)	63(27)	120(52)	32(14)	15(6)
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.	9(4)	65(28)	137(59)	21(9)	1(0)
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.	57(25)	84(37)	56(24)	25(11)	8(4)
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.	3(1)	33(14)	118(51)	55(24)	21(9)
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option; therefore the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	59(25)	96(41)	36(16)	28(12)	13(6)
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	16(7)	82(35)	84(36)	42(18)	8(3)

Financial Management					
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.	11(5)	81(34)	77(33)	44(19)	24(10)
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.	16(7)	48(20)	54(23)	96(41)	22(9)
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	15(6)	69(29)	65(28)	57(24)	30(13)
Consolidation					
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	7(3)	82(35)	47(20)	76(32)	23(10)
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.	39(17)	57(24)	49(21)	80(34)	11(5)
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.	41(17)	70(29)	54(23)	65(27)	8(3)
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.	11(5)	87(37)	49(21)	61(26)	28(12)
Transportation					
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.	3(1)	47(20)	119(52)	47(20)	14(6)
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.	5(2)	69(30)	106(46)	40(17)	12(5)
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.	17(7)	58(25)	142(61)	14(6)	1(0)
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute bus drivers.	3(1)	16(7)	189(82)	18(8)	5(2)
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers dollars.	10(4)	9(4)	46(20)	77(33)	93(40)
Miscellaneous					
A longer school day would increase student learning.	4(2)	16(7)	7(3)	124(51)	91(38)
A longer school year would increase student learning.	7(3)	62(26)	16(7)	81(34)	72(30)
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.	21(9)	63(26)	29(12)	53(22)	76(31)
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.	10(4)	14(6)	82(35)	47(20)	84(35)
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	21(9)	95(39)	19(8)	71(30)	35(15)
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.	34(14)	126(53)	43(18)	30(13)	6(3)

*Response choices included SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=No Opinion, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree.

Table C:2. Frequency and Percentage of Responses by Recognized Teachers

Staff Development	**SA*** #(%)	**A*** #(%)	**N*** #(%)	**D*** #(%)	**SD*** #(%)
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers.	2(4)	8(15)	1(2)	30(56)	13(24)
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge.	10(19)	26(48)	1(2)	12(22)	5(9)
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received.	8(15)	19(36)	5(9)	18(34)	3(6)
Staff development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom.	3(6)	30(56)	4(7)	12(22)	5(9)
Computers					
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier.	7(13)	15(28)	8(15)	20(38)	3(6)
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers.		28(52)	4(7)	17(32)	5(9)
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized.	13(24)	24(44)	4(7)	11(20)	2(4)
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement.	6(12)	31(60)	9(17)	4(8)	2(4)
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers.	3(6)	24(46)	5(10)	20(39)	
Evaluation					
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals and superintendents).	2(4)	3(6)	3(6)	17(32)	29(54)
Many personnel never really get any evaluation.	7(13)	16(30)	8(15)	16(30)	6(11)
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing.	7(13)	17(32)	6(11)	21(39)	3(6)
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills.	2(4)	15(28)	8(15)	21(40)	7(13)
Teacher Incentives					
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best.	2(4)	17(32)	6(11)	25(46)	4(7)
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers.	8(15)	25(46)	9(17)	11(20)	1(2)
The current system of salary increases is equitable.		16(30)	9(17)	20(37)	9(17)
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve.	7(13)	23(43)	4(7)	17(32)	3(6)
Personnel Assignment/Mentoring					
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students.	12(22)	23(43)	9(17)	8(15)	2(4)
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students.	1(2)	5(9)	7(13)	21(39)	20(37)
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences.	3(6)	21(39)	9(17)	13(24)	8(15)
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students.	10(19)	23(43)	12(22)	7(13)	2(4)

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements					
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	11(20)	32(59)	5(9)	4(7)	2(4)
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.	11(21)	25(47)	10(19)	7(13)	
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.	6(11)	18(33)	7(13)	21(39)	2(4)
New Instructional Goals and Objectives published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provides standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	6(11)	30(57)	8(15)	7(13)	2(4)
Governance					
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	4(8)	24(45)	10(19)	12(23)	3(6)
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	3(6)	27(50)	11(20)	7(13)	6(11)
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	5(9)	12(23)	17(32)	16(30)	3(6)
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.	6(11)	30(56)	4(7)	13(24)	1(2)
The present system of governance is not working well.	2(4)	8(16)	17(34)	23(46)	
Inclusion					
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	5(9)	23(43)	5(9)	18(33)	3(6)
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.	11(21)	27(51)	1(2)	12(23)	2(4)
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.	6(11)	27(51)	5(9)	14(26)	1(2)
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	20(38)	23(43)	5(9)	4(8)	1(2)
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.		5(9)		26(48)	23(43)
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.	4(7)	7(13)	8(15)	27(50)	8(15)
Funding					
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.		6(11)	15(28)	21(40)	11(21)
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.		2(4)	12(23)	23(43)	16(30)
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.	8(15)	21(40)	12(23)	8(15)	4(8)
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	9(17)	19(37)	18(35)	6(12)	
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of the special education students.	5(10)	19(37)	14(27)	10(19)	4(8)
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.	1(2)	20(39)	19(37)	9(18)	2(4)
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.	1(2)	18(35)	27(53)	5(10)	
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.	10(19)	20(38)	12(23)	5(9)	6(11)
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.	1(2)	9(18)	31(61)	8(16)	2(4)
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option, therefore the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	16(30)	19(36)	9(17)	8(15)	1(2)
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	5(9)	19(36)	18(34)	10(19)	1(2)

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Financial Management					
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.	8(15)	19(37)	16(31)	5(10)	4(8)
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.	2(4)	7(13)	10(19)	26(49)	8(15)
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	7(13)	21(40)	15(28)	6(11)	4(8)
Consolidation					
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	5(10)	17(33)	15(29)	11(22)	3(6)
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.	3(6)	11(22)	11(22)	21(41)	5(10)
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.	3(6)	18(35)	11(21)	16(31)	4(8)
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.	4(8)	24(47)	9(18)	11(22)	3(6)
Transportation					
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.	1(2)	13(26)	18(36)	14(28)	4(8)
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.	2(4)	13(26)	16(32)	14(28)	5(10)
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.	7(14)	13(26)	26(52)	4(8)	
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute bus drivers.		7(14)	37(76)	4(8)	1(2)
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers dollars.		1(2)	12(24)	15(30)	22(44)
Miscellaneous					
A longer school day would increase student learning.	2(4)	5(9)	4(8)	27(51)	15(28)
A longer school year would increase student learning.	5(9)	13(25)	6(11)	17(32)	12(23)
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.	8(15)	19(36)	6(11)	14(26)	6(11)
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.	1(2)		15(29)	15(29)	20(39)
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	8(15)	16(30)	2(4)	18(34)	9(17)
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.	14(26)	23(43)	9(17)	7(13)	

*Response choices included SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=No Opinion, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree.

Table C:3. Frequency and Percentage of Responses by Principals

Staff Development	SA* #(%)	A* #(%)	N* #(%)	D* #(%)	SD* #(%)
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers.	1(4)	2(8)		14(56)	8(32)
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge.	1(4)	21(84)	2(8)		1(4)
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received.	1(4)	12(48)	1(4)	10(40)	1(4)
Staff development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom.		15(63)		6(25)	3(13)
Computers					
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier.	3(13)	5(21)	4(17)	10(42)	2(8)
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers.	1(4)	11(46)	1(4)	7(29)	4(17)
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized.	4(16)	8(32)		11(44)	2(8)
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement.	2(8)	15(60)	5(20)	2(8)	1(4)
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers.	5(20)	8(32)	3(12)	9(36)	
Evaluation					
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals and superintendents).		1(4)	1(4)	10(40)	13(52)
Many personnel never really get any evaluation.	2(8)	4(16)	1(4)	9(36)	9(36)
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing.	2(8)	5(20)		14(56)	4(16)
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills.		7(28)	4(16)	9(36)	5(20)
Teacher Incentives					
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best.		3(12)	4(16)	12(48)	6(24)
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers.	4(16)	9(36)	2(8)	9(36)	1(4)
The current system of salary increases is equitable.	1(4)	6(24)	4(16)	7(28)	7(28)
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve.	4(16)	9(36)		10(40)	2(8)
Personnel Assignment/Mentoring					
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students.	7(28)	10(40)	3(12)	5(20)	
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students.		3(13)	3(13)	7(29)	11(46)
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences.		7(28)	4(16)	9(36)	5(20)
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students.	5(21)	14(58)	4(17)	1(4)	

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements					
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	4(16)	13(52)	2(8)	4(16)	2(8)
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.	5(21)	9(38)	4(17)	3(13)	3(13)
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.	4(17)	6(25)	3(13)	9(38)	2(8)
New Instructional Goals and Objectives published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provides standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	1(4)	12(48)	5(20)	3(12)	4(16)
Governance					
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	3(13)	11(46)	3(13)	5(21)	2(8)
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	2(8)	9(36)	3(12)	6(24)	5(20)
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	6(24)	3(12)	5(20)	7(28)	4(16)
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.	1(4)	9(36)	1(4)	10(40)	4(16)
The present system of governance is not working well.	5(20)	8(32)	4(16)	7(28)	1(4)
Inclusion					
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	2(8)	12(48)	3(12)	5(20)	3(12)
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.	3(12)	12(48)	2(8)	7(28)	1(4)
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.	3(13)	12(50)	2(8)	5(21)	2(8)
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	8(32)	13(52)		3(12)	1(4)
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.				16(64)	9(36)
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.	2(8)	1(4)	2(8)	13(52)	7(28)
Funding					
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.		3(12)	2(8)	11(44)	9(36)
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.	1(4)		2(8)	11(44)	11(44)
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.	3(12)	12(48)	4(16)	1(4)	5(20)
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	2(8)	18(72)	3(12)		2(8)
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of the special education students.	2(8)	11(44)	2(8)	7(28)	3(12)
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.	1(4)	7(28)	8(32)	6(24)	3(12)
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.	2(8)	9(36)	9(36)	4(16)	1(4)
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.	1(4)	2(8)	2(8)	8(32)	12(48)
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.	1(4)	2(8)	10(42)	7(29)	4(17)
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option, therefore the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	8(32)	11(44)	2(8)	1(4)	3(12)
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	6(25)	6(25)	7(29)	4(17)	1(4)

Financial Management					
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.	2(8)	16(64)	5(20)	1(4)	1(4)
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.		8(32)	5(20)	8(32)	4(16)
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	3(12)	13(52)	2(8)	6(24)	1(4)
Consolidation					
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	4(16)	10(40)	3(12)	4(16)	4(16)
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.	5(20)	7(28)	4(16)	8(32)	1(4)
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.	7(28)	5(20)	7(28)	6(24)	
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.		8(33)	3(13)	7(29)	6(25)
Transportation					
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.	1(4)	7(28)	11(44)	3(12)	3(12)
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.	1(4)	10(40)	6(24)	5(20)	3(12)
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.	4(16)	7(28)	13(52)	1(4)	
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute bus drivers.	1(4)	3(12)	14(56)	6(24)	1(4)
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers dollars.	1(4)		4(17)	9(38)	10(42)
Miscellaneous					
A longer school day would increase student learning.	1(4)	5(20)		13(52)	6(24)
A longer school year would increase student learning.	1(4)	7(28)	2(8)	9(36)	6(24)
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.	6(24)	6(24)	5(20)	3(12)	5(20)
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.	2(8)		4(16)	6(24)	13(52)
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	5(20)	10(40)		6(24)	4(16)
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.	6(24)	9(36)	6(24)	2(8)	2(8)

*Response choices included SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=No Opinion, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree.

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Table C:4. Frequency and Percentage of Responses by Recognized Principals

Staff Development	SA* #(%)	A* #(%)	N* #(%)	D* #(%)	SD* #(%)
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers.			1(7)	8(53)	6(40)
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge.	5(33)	6(40)	3(20)	1(7)	
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received.		6(40)		7(47)	2(13)
Staff development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom.		9(60)	2(13)	4(27)	
Computers					
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier.	1(7)	6(40)		7(47)	1(7)
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers.		7(47)		7(47)	1(7)
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized.	2(14)	9(64)		3(21)	
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement.	1(7)	6(43)	4(29)	3(21)	
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers.	2(13)	7(47)	1(7)	5(33)	
Evaluation					
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals and superintendents).		2(13)	1(7)	5(33)	7(47)
Many personnel never really get any evaluation.		4(27)		6(40)	5(33)
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing.	1(7)	8(53)		3(20)	3(20)
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills.		4(27)	1(7)	9(60)	1(7)
Teacher Incentives					
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best.		5(33)	1(7)	8(53)	1(7)
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers.	2(13)	8(53)		5(33)	
The current system of salary increases is equitable.	2(13)	2(13)	2(13)	8(53)	1(7)
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve.		6(40)	2(13)	6(40)	1(7)
Personnel Assignment/Mentoring					
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students.	4(27)	6(40)	1(7)	4(27)	
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students.				5(33)	10(67)
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences.		9(60)	1(7)	5(33)	
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students.	5(33)	8(53)		2(13)	

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements					
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	4(27)	6(40)		5(33)	
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.		12(86)	1(7)	1(7)	
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.		5(36)		9(64)	
New Instructional Goals and Objectives published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provides standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	2(14)	11(79)		1(7)	
Governance					
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.		7(47)	1(7)	7(47)	
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.		9(60)		6(40)	
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	3(20)	5(33)	2(13)	5(33)	
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.	1(7)	11(79)		2(14)	
The present system of governance is not working well.		6(40)	3(20)	6(40)	
Inclusion					
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	1(7)	11(73)	1(7)	2(13)	
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.	1(7)	5(33)		7(47)	2(13)
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.	2(13)	10(67)	1(7)	2(13)	
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	3(20)	6(40)	2(13)	4(27)	
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.	1(7)	1(7)		9(60)	4(27)
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.	1(7)		1(7)	8(53)	5(33)
Funding					
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.			1(7)	10(67)	4(27)
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.				9(60)	6(40)
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.		9(60)	2(13)	3(20)	1(7)
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	5(33)	4(27)	4(27)	2(13)	
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of the special education students.		6(40)	3(20)	5(33)	1(7)
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.		5(33)	4(27)	4(27)	2(13)
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.		8(53)	5(33)	2(13)	
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.	1(7)	1(7)	2(13)	6(40)	5(33)
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.		5(33)	2(13)	7(47)	1(7)
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option, therefore the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	4(27)	5(33)		2(13)	4(27)
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	1(7)	4(27)	4(27)	6(40)	

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Financial Management					
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.	2(14)	7(50)	2(14)	2(14)	1(7)
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.	2(14)	3(21)	2(14)	4(29)	3(21)
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	3(21)	4(29)	5(36)	2(14)	
Consolidation					
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	2(13)	6(40)		5(33)	2(13)
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.		1(7)	3(20)	10(67)	1(7)
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.		3(20)	2(13)	9(60)	1(7)
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.	1(7)	8(53)	3(20)	3(20)	
Transportation					
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.		5(33)	6(40)	4(27)	
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.		3(20)	6(40)	6(40)	
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.		8(53)	5(33)	2(13)	
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute bus drivers.			9(60)	6(40)	
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers dollars.		2(13)	4(27)	4(27)	5(33)
Miscellaneous					
A longer school day would increase student learning.		2(14)		9(64)	3(21)
A longer school year would increase student learning.		6(43)	1(7)	5(36)	2(14)
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.	1(7)	7(50)	3(21)	1(7)	2(14)
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.	1(7)		1(7)	7(47)	6(40)
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	1(7)	6(40)	1(7)	5(33)	2(13)
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.	2(14)	10(71)	1(7)	1(7)	

*Response choices included SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=No Opinion, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree.

Table C:5. Frequency and Percentage of Responses by Superintendents

Staff Development	**SA*** #(%)	**A*** #(%)	**N*** #(%)	**D*** #(%)	**SD*** #(%)
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers.		1(4)	1(4)	14(54)	10(39)
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge.	7(26)	16(59)		4(15)	
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received.	1(4)	9(33)	3(11)	12(44)	2(7)
Staff development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom.	4(15)	14(52)	1(4)	7(26)	1(4)
Computers					
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier.	1(4)	5(19)	3(11)	17(63)	1(4)
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers.		13(48)	1(4)	11(41)	2(7)
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized.		17(63)	2(7)	8(30)	
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement.	3(11)	21(78)	3(11)		
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers.	1(4)	15(63)	1(4)	7(29)	
Evaluation					
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals and superintendents).		2(8)	2(8)	14(54)	8(31)
Many personnel never really get any evaluation.	1(4)	7(27)		14(54)	4(15)
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing.	1(4)	8(31)	1(4)	15(58)	1(4)
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills.	2(8)	12(48)	1(4)	8(32)	2(8)
Teacher Incentives					
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best.	1(4)	10(40)	6(24)	7(28)	1(4)
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers.	2(8)	14(54)	4(15)	6(23)	
The current system of salary increases is equitable.	2(8)	12(46)	2(8)	5(19)	5(19)
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve.	6(23)	12(46)	4(15)	4(15)	
Personnel Assignment/Mentoring					
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students.	6(23)	15(58)	2(8)	3(12)	
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students.	2(8)		2(8)	10(39)	12(46)
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences.	3(12)	14(54)	3(12)	6(23)	
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students.	9(35)	7(27)	4(15)	6(23)	

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements					
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	3(11)	18(67)		6(22)	
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.	4(15)	12(44)	3(11)	7(26)	1(4)
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.	3(11)	10(37)	3(11)	10(37)	1(4)
New Instructional Goals and Objectives published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provides standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	4(15)	21(78)	2(7)		
Governance					
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	5(19)	17(63)	1(4)	4(15)	
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.	2(7)	14(52)	4(15)	7(26)	
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	4(15)	6(22)	2(8)	12(44)	3(11)
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.	1(4)	19(70)	2(7)	5(19)	
The present system of governance is not working well.	1(4)	3(11)	8(30)	14(52)	1(4)
Inclusion					
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	4(15)	14(52)	2(7)	5(19)	2(7)
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.	2(7)	13(48)	2(7)	10(37)	
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.	3(11)	18(67)	1(4)	5(19)	
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	5(19)	15(58)	3(12)	3(12)	
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.	1(4)	2(7)	1(4)	13(48)	10(37)
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.		3(11)		20(74)	4(15)
Funding					
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.				7(26)	20(74)
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.				4(15)	23(85)
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.	8(30)	10(37)		5(19)	4(15)
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	18(67)	2(7)		2(7)	5(19)
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of the special education students.		4(15)		6(22)	17(63)
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.	2(7)	4(15)	2(7)	6(22)	13(48)
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.	4(15)	10(37)	2(7)	9(33)	2(7)
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.			2(7)	13(48)	12(44)
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.		2(8)	4(15)	10(39)	10(39)
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option, therefore the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	11(41)	7(26)	2(7)	5(19)	2(7)
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	16(59)	10(37)			1(4)

Financial Management					
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.	1(4)	18(67)	3(11)	5(19)	
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.	1(4)	7(26)		12(44)	7(26)
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	9(33)	14(52)	1(4)	3(11)	
Consolidation					
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	5(19)	14(52)	2(7)	4(15)	2(7)
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.	1(4)	3(11)	3(11)	15(56)	5(19)
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.	1(4)	4(15)	1(4)	18(67)	3(11)
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.	2(7)	21(78)	2(7)	2(7)	
Transportation					
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.		3(12)	2(8)	15(58)	6(23)
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.		15(56)	3(11)	8(30)	1(4)
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.	7(26)	14(52)	5(19)	1(4)	
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute bus drivers.		1(4)	1(4)	18(67)	7(26)
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers dollars.		3(12)	2(8)	8(31)	13(50)
Miscellaneous					
A longer school day would increase student learning.		6(22)	1(4)	15(56)	5(19)
A longer school year would increase student learning.	1(4)	16(59)	2(7)	6(22)	2(7)
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.	2(7)	12(44)	7(26)	5(19)	1(4)
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.	4(15)			3(12)	19(73)
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	4(15)	15(56)	1(4)	5(19)	2(7)
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.	2(7)	14(52)	7(26)	4(15)	

*Response choices included SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=No Opinion, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree.

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Table C:6. Frequency and Percentage of Responses by Recognized Superintendents

Staff Development	SA* #(%)	A* #(%)	N* #(%)	D* #(%)	SD* #(%)
Staff development at my school is not relevant to the needs of teachers.				4(50)	4(50)
The present staff development provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their subject area knowledge.		7(88)		1(13)	
Staff development provides no follow-up support to reinforce the training received.		3(43)	1(14)	1(14)	2(29)
Staff development provides enough training for teachers to apply new ideas to the classroom.		4(50)		4(50)	
Computers					
The introduction of computers in the classroom has made the staffs' jobs easier.	1(13)			7(88)	
Training provided to the teachers has given them sufficient knowledge to help students use computers.	2(25)	4(50)		1(13)	1(13)
Computers in the schools are not fully utilized.		5(63)		3(38)	
Computers in the classroom have enhanced student achievement.	1(13)	7(88)			
Teachers do not have the necessary skills to use the computers.		3(38)		5(63)	
Evaluation					
The evaluation system does a good job of weeding out incompetent personnel (teachers, principals and superintendents).		2(25)		3(38)	3(38)
Many personnel never really get any evaluation.		2(25)		3(38)	3(38)
Many personnel get no feedback as to how they are performing.		1(13)		6(75)	1(13)
The present evaluation system helps personnel improve their skills.		5(63)	2(25)	1(13)	
Teacher Incentives					
The present WV educational system does a good job of motivating teachers to do their best.		2(25)		5(63)	1(13)
The current licensure system does not ensure quality teachers.		6(75)	1(13)	1(13)	
The current system of salary increases is equitable.		5(63)		3(38)	
The "permanent" license causes some teachers to lose the incentive to grow and improve.	1(13)	6(75)		1(13)	
Personnel Assignment/Mentoring					
The current practice of allowing teachers to transfer during the school year is harmful to the students.	2(25)	5(63)		1(13)	
The current practice of giving seniority a priority in filling positions is best for the students.				4(50)	4(50)
New teachers are provided with good mentoring experiences.		5(63)		3(38)	
The present system of assigning school personnel is not for the good of the students.	1(13)	6(75)		1(13)	

Curriculum & Graduation Requirements					
A uniform statewide curriculum required by the state is necessary for minimum standards.	3(38)	5(63)			
Standards for graduation should be more stringent.		6(75)		2(25)	
The present curriculum does not have high enough standards.		3(38)		4(50)	1(13)
New Instructional Goals and Objectives published by the Dept. of Ed., 1996, provides standards that will help improve educational quality in our schools.	3(38)	3(38)	2(25)		
Governance					
The current level of governance provided by the county superintendents and boards is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.		6(75)		1(13)	1(13)
The current level of governance provided by the state is necessary to provide equitable education for all students.		5(63)		2(25)	1(13)
The current organizational structure of 55 different counties is not the most efficient method of governing the schools.	1(13)	3(38)		4(50)	
The degree of autonomy currently experienced by our schools allows principals and teachers the opportunity to be creative.		5(63)		2(25)	1(13)
The present system of governance is not working well.	1(13)	1(13)		6(75)	
Inclusion					
Inclusion is necessary for the social development of special education students.	2(25)	4(50)		2(25)	
Inclusion fails to allow for the individual attention that special education students need.		1(13)		6(75)	1(13)
Inclusion teaches the rest of the students to accept people with differences.		6(75)		2(25)	
Classroom disruptions caused by special education students are unfair to the regular students.	1(13)	6(75)		1(13)	
Most classroom teachers feel well prepared to deal with inclusion.				6(75)	2(25)
It would be beneficial to all students to keep special education students separate.		1(13)		5(63)	2(25)
Funding					
The current State Aid Funding Formula is adequate and equitable to meet the needs of West Virginia's students.				3(38)	5(63)
The current allowance that determines the number of teachers paid for by the state (the lesser of 53.5 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 74 per 1,000 net enrollment) does not create any significant budget problems for the counties.				3(38)	5(63)
The extra funds provided for gifted and talented students are necessary to meet these students' needs.	3(38)	5(63)			
The current ratio that determines the number of service personnel paid for by the state (the lesser of 34 per 1,000 adjusted enrollment, or 43.5 per 1,000 net enrollment) creates significant budget problems for the counties.	3(38)	4(50)			1(13)
The level of funding provided for special education programs is adequate to meet the needs of the special education students.				7(88)	1(13)
The transportation allowance providing 80% of the costs for maintenance, operation, and related expenses is reasonable and fair for the 55 counties.		2(25)		4(50)	2(25)
The transportation allowance providing 10% of the replacement value of each county board's bus fleet does not replenish the inventory in a timely manner.	1(13)	5(63)		1(13)	1(13)
WV spends too large a proportion of the educational funds on administrators.				4(50)	4(50)
The allowance providing $150 for administrative costs for each authorized teacher is sufficient to meet planned expenditures for this budget category.		1(13)		6(75)	1(13)
Property tax excess levies should remain a local option, therefore the revenues they generate should not be shared with other counties.	2(25)	1(13)	1(13)	1(13)	3(38)
The allowance for substitute teachers salaries (i.e., 2.5% of the salaries for authorized teachers) does not provide enough money for substitute teacher costs.	5(63)	3(38)			

Financial Management					
The accountability and fiscal oversight exhibited by my county board of education ensures it does not incur end of the year deficits.		4(57)		3(43)	
Schools in my county appear to be less effective than other WV schools in obtaining adequate financial resources to support required educational programs.		1(13)		6(75)	1(13)
My county is extremely efficient in how it manages its budget.	2(25)	5(63)	1(13)		
Consolidation					
The School Building Authority has efficiently provided for the construction of public school buildings throughout West Virginia.	1(13)	5(63)	1(13)	1(13)	
Consolidation has created more problems than it has attempted to solve.		2(25)		4(50)	2(25)
Money being spent to consolidate could be more effectively used to improve the overall quality of education in West Virginia's schools.		2(25)		4(50)	2(25)
Consolidation efforts, to date, reflect a positive strategy which has resulted in better schools.	2(25)	4(50)	1(13)	1(13)	
Transportation					
Current allowances for transportation costs are sufficient for each county to operate a quality transportation program.				4(50)	4(50)
The current organizational structure of 55 different transportation departments is the most efficient method of providing the needed transportation for students.			1(13)	5(63)	2(25)
Sparsely populated counties are spending too much of their resources on their transportation budget.	3(38)	4(50)		1(13)	
The allowance for substitute drivers (2.5% of the salaries of authorized service personnel) covers the actual costs of substitute bus drivers.				5(63)	3(38)
Directly reimbursing families for transportation costs when their children attend private schools is an effective use of taxpayers dollars.		2(25)	1(13)	1(13)	4(50)
Miscellaneous					
A longer school day would increase student learning.		6(75)	1(13)		1(13)
A longer school year would increase student learning.		7(88)			1(13)
I would like to see my school/district provide year-round education.		3(38)	2(25)	2(25)	1(13)
Enactment of "unfunded mandates" by the state has not been a major obstacle for counties to achieve a balanced budget.		2(25)		1(13)	5(63)
Teachers meet frequently in my school/district to coordinate the academic activities of students (e.g., cross curriculum, team teaching).	1(13)	5(63)		2(25)	
Students would learn more from additional use of team teaching.		6(75)	2(25)		

*Response choices included SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=No Opinion, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree.

Appendix D

Table D:1. Frequency and percentage of respondents who provided comments on each educational area.

Educational Area	Educators (n=304) # (%)	Recognized Educators (n=80) # (%)	Total (n=384) # (%)
Staff Development	205 (67%)	67 (84%)	272 (71%)
Curriculum and Graduation Requirements	143 (47%)	53 (66%)	196 (51%)
Financial Management	100 (33%)	34 (43%)	134 (35%)
Governance	127 (42%)	50 (63%)	177 (46%)
Consolidation	114 (38%)	28 (35%)	142 (37%)
Computers	230 (76%)	69 (86%)	299 (78%)
Inclusion	194 (64%)	57 (71%)	251 (65%)
Teacher Incentives	192 (63%)	66 (83%)	258 (67%)
Evaluation	185 (61%)	66 (83%)	251 (65%)
Personnel Assignment/Mentoring	176 (58%)	65 (81%)	241 (63%)
Funding	148 (49%)	52 (65%)	200 (52%)
Transportation	88 (29%)	23 (29%)	111 (29%)

The Education alliance
Business and Community for Public Schools

About the Education Alliance

The Education Alliance, formerly the West Virginia Education Fund, is distinguished as the nation's first statewide education fund, founded in 1983. Its mission is to serve as a catalyst for business and community involvement with K-12 public schools to enhance student learning opportunities and achievement. The Alliance's programs and services share a singular focus: to assure that quality public education is available to all children in West Virginia.

The Education Alliance is a nonprofit organization supported by contributions from foundations, businesses, and individuals, as well as the volunteer hours of thousands of West Virginians. The Education Alliance works strategically throughout the State to recognize and encourage excellence in teaching and school performance, recruit community and business volunteers to support West Virginia's public schools, provide students and teachers with a better understanding of the preparation needed for employment or higher education, and educate the public and policy makers on critical education issues through research and analysis.

The Education Alliance has seven programs under its auspices:

- Mini-Grants for Classroom Projects
- Partnerships in Education
- Read Aloud West Virginia
- Tech Corps
- Working on Wellness
- Ashland Inc. Day on Campus
- Education Policy Research Institute

Other Alliance initiatives include technical assistance for Local School Improvement Councils to become more effective, and advocacy for higher academic standards for West Virginia's schools.

The results of The Education Alliance's work are greater public involvement in schools, reduced isolation of the schools from their communities, enhanced learning experiences for students, increased college attendance, better informed decision making, school access to current modes of technology, and promotion of lifelong wellness.

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